

WILSON'S TALES OF THE
BORDERS, AND OF
SCOTLAND. HISTORICAL,
TRADITIONARY, AND IMAGIN-
ATIVE.

REVISED BY ALEXANDER LEIGHTON, ONE OF
THE ORIGINAL EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

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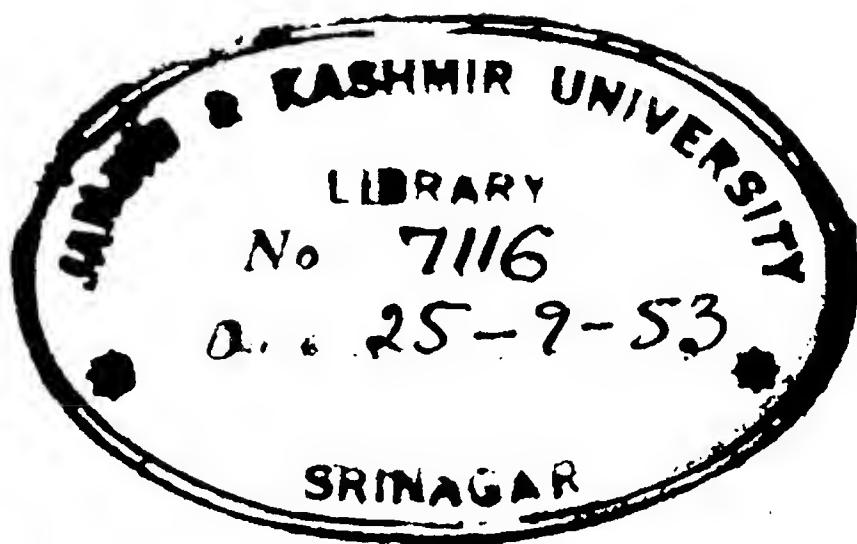
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE CRIPPLE; OR, EBENEZER THE DISOWNED <i>(John Mackay Wilson)</i>	1
THE LEGEND OF FAIR HELEN OF KIRCONNEL <i>(Alexander Leighton)</i>	23
TOM DUNCAN'S YARN..... <i>(Oliver Richardson)</i>	55
THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.... <i>(Professor Thomas Gillespie)</i>	
THE THREE BRETHREN.....	87
THE MISTAKE RECTIFIED.....	97
DÙRÀ DEN; OR, SECOND THOUGHTS ARE BEST..	106
THE LAIRD OF LUCKY'S HOW..... <i>(Alexander Campbell)</i>	119
THE ABDUCTION <i>(Alexander Leighton)</i>	151
SIR PATRICK HUME: A TALE OF THE HOUSE OF MARCH- MONT..... <i>(John Mackay Wilson)</i>	167
THE SERGEANT'S TALES..... <i>(John Howell)</i>	
THE PACKMAN'S JOURNEY TO LONDON	178
CHARLES LAWSON..... <i>(John Mackay Wilson)</i>	210
BON GAULTIER'S TALES..... <i>(Theodore Martin)</i>	
MRS. HUMPHREY GREENWOOD'S TEA-PARTY	217
THE RECLUSE OF THE HEBRIDES..... <i>(Walter Logan)</i>	230
ELLEN ARUNDEL <i>(Walter Logan)</i>	238
CHATELARD..... <i>(Alexander Campbell)</i>	243
CHRISTIE OF THE CLEEK <i>(Alexander Leighton)</i>	285

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WILSON'S
TALES OF THE BORDERS,
AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE CRIPPLE; OR, EBENEZER THE DISOWNED.

It is proverbial to say, with reference to particular constitutions or habits of body, that May is a *trying* month, and we have known what it is to experience its trials in the sense signified. With our grandmothers too, yea, and with our grandfathers also, May was held to be an unlucky month. Nevertheless, it is a lovely, it is a beautiful month, and the forerunner of the most healthy of the twelve. It is like a timid maiden blushing into womanhood, wooing and yet shrinking from the admiration which her beauty compels. The buds, the blossoms, the young leaves, the tender flowers, the glittering dew-drops, and the song of birds, burst from the grasp of winter as if the God of nature whispered in the sunbeams—"Let there be life!" But it is in the morning only, and before the business of the world summons us to its mechanical and artificial realities, that the beauties of May can be felt in all their freshness. We read of the glories of Eden, and that the earth was cursed because of man's transgression; yet, when we look abroad upon the glowing landscape, above us, and around us, and behold the pure heavens like a sea of music floating over us, and hear the earth answer it back in varied melody, while mountain, wood, and dale, seem dreaming in the sound, and stealing into loveliness, we almost wonder that a bad man should exist in the midst of a world that is still

so beautiful, and where every object around him is a representative of the wisdom, the goodness, the mercy, the purity, and the omnipotence of his Creator. There is a language in the very wild-flowers among our feet that breathes a lesson of virtue. We can appreciate the feeling with which the poet beheld

“The *last* rose of summer left blooming alone;”

but in the firstlings of the spring, the primrose, the lily, and their early train, there is an appeal that passes beyond our senses. They are like the lisplings and the smiles of infancy—lowly preachers, emblems of our own immortality, and we love them like living things. They speak to us of childhood and the scenes of youth, and *memory* dwells in their very fragrance. Yes, May is a beautiful month—it is a month of fair sights and of sweet sounds. To it belongs the lowly primrose blushing by the brae-side in congregated beauty, with here and there a cowslip bending over them like a lover among the flowers; the lily hanging its head by the brook that reflects its image, like a bride at the altar, as if conscious of its own loveliness; the hardy daisy on the green sward, like a proud man struggling in penury with the storms of fate. Now, too, the blossoms on a thousand trees unfold their rainbow hues; the tender leaves seem instinct with life, and expand to the sunbeams; and the bright fields, like an emerald sea, wave their first undulations to the breeze. The lark pours down a flood of melody on the nest of its mate, and the linnet trills a lay of love to its partner from the yellow furze. The chaffinch chants in the hedge its sweet but unvaried *line of music*; the thrush hymns his bold roundelay; and the blackbird swells the chorus; while the bird of spring sends its voice from the glens, like a wandering echo lost between love and sadness; and the swallow, newly returned from warmer climes or its winter sleep,

“Titters from the straw-built shed.”

The insect tribe leap into being, countless in numbers and matchless in livery, and their low hum swims like the embodiment of a dream in the air. The May-fly invites the angler to the river, while the minnow gambols in the brook; the young salmon sports and sparkles in the stream, and the grey trout glides slowly beneath the shadow of a rock in the deep pool. To enjoy for a single hour in a May morning the luxuries which nature spreads around—to wander in its fields and in its woods—to feel ourselves a part of God's glad creation—to *feel* the gowan under our feet, and health circulating through our veins with the refreshing breeze, is a recipe worth all in the *Materia Medica*.

Now, it was before sunrise on such a morning in May as I have described, that a traveller left the Black Bull in Wooler, and proceeded to the Cheviots. He took his route by way of Earle and Langleeford; and, at the latter place, leaving the long and beautiful glen, began to ascend the mountain. On the cairn, which is perhaps about five hundred yards from what is called the extreme summit of the mountain, he met an old and intelligent shepherd, from whom he heard many tales, the legends of the mountains—and amongst others, the following story:—

Near the banks of one of the romantic streams which take their rise among the Cheviots, stood a small and pleasant, and what might be termed respectable or genteel-looking building. It stood like the home of solitude, excluded by mountains from the world. Beneath it, the rivulet wandered over its rugged bed; to the east rose Cheviot, the giant of the hills; to the west, lesser mountains reared their fantastic forms, thinly studded here and there with dwarf alders, which the birds of heaven had planted, and their progeny had nestled in their branches; to the north and the south stretched a long and secluded glen, where beauty blushed in the arms of wildness—and thick woods, where the young fir and the oak of the ancient forest grew together,

flourished beneath the shelter of the hills. Fertility also smiled by the sides of the rivulet, though the rising and setting sun threw the shadows of barrenness over it. Around the cottage stood a clump of solitary firs, and behind it an enclosure of alders, twisted together, sheltered a garden from the storms that swept down the hills.

Now, many years ago, a stranger woman, who brought with her a female domestic and a male infant, became the occupant of this house among the hills. She lived more luxuriously than the sheep-farmers in the neighbourhood, and her accent was not that of the Borders. She was between forty and fifty years of age, and her stature and strength were beyond the ordinary stature and strength of women. Her manners were repulsive, and her bearing haughty; but it seemed the haughtiness of a weak and uneducated mind. Her few neighbours, simple though they were, and little as they saw or knew of the world, its inhabitants and its manners, perceived that the stranger who had come amongst them had not been habituated to the affluence or easy circumstances with which she was then surrounded. The child also was hard-favoured, and of a disagreeable countenance; his back was strangely deformed; his feet were distorted, and his limbs of unequal length. No one could look upon the child without a feeling of compassion, save the woman who was his mother, his nurse, or his keeper (for none knew in what relation she stood to him), and she treated him as a persecutor, who hated his sight, and was weary of his existence.

She gave her name as Mrs Baird; and, as the child grew up, she generally in derision called him "*Æsop*," or, in hatred, "the little monster!" but the woman-servant called him Ebenezer, though she treated him with a degree of harshness only less brutal than she whom he began to call mother. We shall, therefore, in his history mention him by the name of Ebenezer Baird. As he grew in years, the dis-

agreeable expression of his countenance became stronger, his deformity and lameness increased, and the treatment he had experienced added to both.

When nine years of age, he was sent to a boarding-school about twelve miles distant. Here a new series of persecutions awaited him. Until the day of his entering the school, he was almost ignorant that there was an alphabet. He knew not a letter. He had seen one or two books, but he knew not their use: he had never seen any one look upon them; he regarded them merely as he did a picture—a piece of useless furniture, or a plaything. Lamé as he was, he had climbed the steep and the dripping precipice for the eggs of the water-ouzel, sought among the crags for the young of the gorgeous kingfisher, or climbed the tallest trees in quest of the crested wrens, which chirped and fluttered in invisible swarms among the branches.* The birds were to him companions; he wished to rear their young, that they might love him, for there was a lack of something in his heart—he knew not what it was—but it was the void of being beloved, of being regarded. It is said that nature abhors a vacuum, and so did the heart of Ebenezer. He knew not what name to give it, but he longed for something that would show a liking for him, and to which he could show a liking in return. The heart is wicked, but it is not unsocial—its affections wither in solitariness. When he strolled forth on these rambles about the glen, having asked the permission of his mother or keeper (call her what you will) before he went, “Go, imp! Æsop!” she was wont to exclaim, “and I shall pray that you may break your neck

* The water-ouzel, the kingfisher, and the crested wren, abound in the vicinity of the Cheviots, though the latter beautiful little creature is generally considered as quite a *rara avis*; and last year one being shot about Cumberland, the circumstance went the round of the newspapers! But the bird is not rare, it is only difficult to be seen, and generally flutters among the leaves and near the top branches.

before you return." There were no farmers' or shepherds' children within several miles: he had seen some of them, and when they had seen him, they had laughed at his deformity—they had imitated his lameness, and contorted their countenances into a caricatured resemblance of his. Such were poor Ebenezer's acquirements, and such his acquaintance with human nature, when he entered the boarding-school. A primer was put into his hands. "What must I do with it?" thought Ebenezer. He beheld the rod of correction in the hands of the teacher, and he trembled—for his misshapen shoulders were familiar with such an instrument. He heard others read, he saw them write; and he feared, wondered, and trembled the more. He thought that he would be called upon to do the same, and he knew he could not. He had no idea of *learning*—he had never heard of such a thing. He thought that he must do as he saw others doing at once, and he cast many troubled looks at the lord of a hundred boys. When the name of "Ebenezer Baird" was called out, he burst into tears, he sobbed, terror overwhelmed him. But when the teacher approached him kindly, took him from his seat, placed him between his knees, patted his head, and desired him to speak after him, the heart of the little cripple was assured, and more than assured; it was the first time he had experienced kindness, and he could have fallen on the ground and hugged the knees of his master. The teacher, indeed, found Ebenezer the most ignorant scholar he had ever met with, but he was no tyrant of the birch, though to his pupils

"A man severe he was, and stern to view;"

and though he had all the manners and austerity of the old school about him, he did not lay his head upon the pillow with his arm tired by the incessant use of the ferula. He was touched with the simplicity and the extreme ignorance of his new boarder, and he felt also for his lameness and deformity. Thrice he went over the alphabet with his pupil,

commencing, "*Big Aw—Little Aw*," and having got over *b*, he told him to remember that *c* was like a half-moon. "Ye'll aye mind *c* again," added he; "think ye see the moon." Thus they went on to *g*, and he asked him what the carters said to their horses when they wished them to go faster; but this Ebenezer could not tell—carts and horses were sights that he had seen as objects of wonder. They are but seldom seen amongst the hills now, and in those days they were almost unknown. Getting over *h*, he strove to impress *i* upon the memory of his pupil, by touching the solitary grey orbit in his countenance (for Ebenezer had but one), and asking him what he called it. "My *e'e*," answered Ebenezer.

"No, sir, you must not say your *e'e*, but your *eye*—mind that; and that letter is *I*."

The teacher went on, showing him that he could not forget round *O*, and crooked *S*; and in truth, after his first lesson, Ebenezer was master of these two letters. And, afterwards, when the teacher, in trying him promiscuously through the alphabet, would inquire, "What letter is this?"—"I no ken," the cripple would reply; "but I'm sure it's no *O*, and it's no *S*." Within a week he was master of the six-and-twenty mystical symbols, with the exception of four—and those four were *b* and *d*, *p* and *q*. Ebenezer could not for three months be brought to distinguish the *b* from the *d*, nor the *p* from the *q*; but he had never even heard that he had a right hand and a left until he came to the school—and how could it be expected?

Scarce, however, had he mastered the alphabet, until the faculties of the deformed began to expand. He now both understood and felt what it was to learn. He passed from class to class with a rapidity that astonished his teacher. He could not join in the boisterous sports of his schoolfellows, and while they were engaged in their pastime, he sought solitude, and his task accompanied him. He possessed

strong natural talents, and his infirmities gave them the assistance of industry. His teacher noted these things in the cripple, and he was gratified with them; but he hesitated to express his feelings openly, lest the charge of partiality should be brought against him. Ebenezer, however, had entered the academy as the butt of his schoolfellows—they mocked, they mimicked, they tormented, they despised, or affected to despise him; and his talents and progress, instead of abating their persecutions, augmented them. His teacher was afraid to show him more kindness than he showed to others; and his schoolfellows gloried in annoying the cripple—they persecuted, they shunned, they hated him more than even his mother did. He began to hate the world, for he had found none that would love him. His teacher was the only human being that had ever whispered to him words of praise or of kindness, and that had always been in cold, guarded, and measured terms.

Before he was eighteen, he had acquired all the knowledge that his teacher could impart, and he returned to the cottage among the mountains. There, however, he was again subjected to a persecution more barbarous than that which he had met with from his schoolfellows. Mrs Baird mocked, insulted, and drove him from her presence; and her domestic showed him neither kindness nor respect. In stature, he scarcely exceeded five feet; and his body was feeble as well as deformed. The cruelty with which he had been treated had given an asperity to his temper, and made him almost a hater of the human race; and these feelings had lent their character to his countenance, marking its naturally harsh expression with suspicion and melancholy.

He was about five-and-twenty when the pangs and the terrors of death fell upon her whom he regarded as his parent. She died—as a sinner dies—with insulted eternity frowning to receive her. A few minutes before her death, she desired the cripple to approach her bedside. She fixed

her closing eyes, which affection had never lighted, upon his. She informed him that he was not her son.

“Oh, tell me, then, whose son I am! Who are my parents?” he exclaimed, eagerly. “Speak! speak!”

“Your parents!” she muttered; and remorse and ignorance held her departing soul in their grasp. She struggled; she again continued: “Your parents! no, Ebenezer, no! I dare not name them! I have sworn—I have sworn! and a death-bed is no time to break an oath!”

“Speak! speak! Tell me, as you hope for heaven!” cried the cripple, with his thin, bony fingers grasping the wrists of the dying woman.

“Monster! monster!” she screamed, wildly, and in terror, “leave me—leave me! You are provided for—open that chest—the chest—the chest!”

Ebenezer loosed his grasp; he sprang towards a strong chest which stood in the room. “The keys! the keys!” he exclaimed, wildly; and again hurrying to the bed, he violently pulled a bunch of keys from beneath her pillow. But while he applied them to the chest, the herald of death rattled in the throat of its victim; and, with one agonising throe and a deep groan, her spirit escaped, and her body lay a corpse upon the bed.

He opened the chest, and in it he found securities, which settled upon him, under the name of Ebenezer Baird, five thousand pounds. But there was nothing which threw light on his parentage—nothing to inform who he was, or why he was there.

The body of her who had never shed a tear over him he accompanied to the grave. But now a deeper gloom fell upon him. He met but few men, and the few he met shunned him, for there was a wildness and a bitterness in his words—a railing against the world—which they wished not to hear. He fancied, too, that they despised him—that their eyes were ever examining the form of his deformities;

sun, for it revealed his shadow; but he wandered in rapture, gazing on the midnight heavens, calling the stars by name, while his soul was lifted up with their glory, and his deformity lost and overshadowed in the depth of their magnificence. He loved the flowers of day, the song of morning birds, and the wildness or beauty of the landscape; but these dwindled, and drew not forth his soul as did the awful gorgeousness of night, with its ten thousand worlds lighted up, burning, sparkling, glimmering in immensity—the gems that studded the throne of the Eternal. While others slept, the deformed wandered on the mountains, holding communion with the heavens.

About the period we refer to, a gay party came upon a visit to a gentleman whose mansion was situated about three miles from the cottage of the cripple. As they rode out, they frequently passed him in his wanderings. And when they did so, some turned to gaze on him with a look of prying curiosity, others laughed and called to their companions—and the indignation of Ebenezer was excited, and the frown grew black upon his face.

He was wandering in a wood in the glen, visiting his favourite wild-flowers (for he had many that he visited daily, and each was familiar to him as the face of man to man—he rejoiced when they budded, blossomed, and laughed in their summer joy, and he grieved when they withered and died away), when a scream of distress burst upon his ear. His faithful mastiff started, and answered to the sound. He hurried from the wood to whence the sound proceeded as rapidly as his lameness would admit. The mastiff followed by his side, and, by its signs of impatience, seemed eager to increase its speed, though it would not forsake him. The cries of distress continued, and became louder. On emerging from the wood, he perceived a young lady rushing wildly towards it, and behind her, within ten yards, followed an infuriated bull. A few moments more, and she must

and he returned their glance with a scowl, and their words with the accents of hatred. Even as he passed the solitary farmhouse, the younger children fled in terror, and the elder laughed, or pointed towards him the finger of curiosity. All these things fell upon the heart of the cripple, and turned the human kindness of his bosom into gall. His companions became the solitude of the mountains, and the silence of the woods. They heard his bitter soliloquies without reviling him, or echo answered him in tones of sympathy more mournful than his own. He sought a thing that he might love, that might unlock his prisoned heart, or give life to its blighted feelings. He loved the very primrose, because it was a thing of beauty, and shrank not from his deformity as man did. To him it gave forth its sweetness, and its leaves withered not at his touch; and he bent and kissed the flower that smiled upon him whom his kind avoided. He courted the very storms of winter, for they shunned him not, but spent their fury on his person, unconscious of its form. The only living thing that regarded him, or that had ever evinced affection towards him, was a dog, of the mastiff kind, which ever followed at his side, licked his hand, and received its food from it. And on this living thing all the affections that his heart ever felt were expended. He loved it as a companion, a friend, and protector; and he knew it was not ungrateful—it never avoided him; but, when mockery or insult was offered to its master, it growled, and looked in his face, as if asking permission to punish the offender.

Such was the life that he had passed until he was between thirty and forty years of age. Still he continued his solitary rambles, having a feeling for everything around him but man. Man only was his persecutor—man only despised him. His own kind and his own kindred had shut him out from them and disowned him—his sight had been hateful to them, and his form loathsome. He avoided the very

have fallen its victim. With an eager howl, the dog sprang from the side of its master, and stood between the lady and her pursuer. Ebenezer forgot his lameness and the feebleness of his frame, and he hastened at his utmost speed to the rescue of a human being. Even at that moment a glow of delight passed through his heart, that the despised cripple would save the life of a fellow-mortal—of one of the race that shunned him. Ere he approached, the lady had fallen, exhausted and in terror, on the ground. The mastiff kept the enraged animal at bay, and, with a strength such as he had never before exhibited, Ebenezer raised the lady in his arms, and bore her to the wood. He placed her against a tree: the stream passed by within a few yards, and he brought water in the palms of his hands, and knelt over her, to bathe her temples and her fair brow. Her brow was indeed fair, and her face beautiful beyond all that he had looked upon. Her golden hair in wavy ringlets fell upon her shoulders—but her deep blue eyes were closed. Her years did not appear to be more than twenty.

“Beautiful!—beautiful!” exclaimed the cripple, as he dropped the water on her face, and gazed on it as he spoke—“it is wondrous beautiful! But she will open her eyes—she will turn from me as doth her race!—as from the animal that pursued her!—yet, sure she is beautiful!” and again, as he spoke, Ebenezer sighed.

The fair being recovered—she raised her eyes—she gazed on his face, and turned not away from it. She expressed no false horror on beholding his countenance—no affected revulsion at the sight of his deformity; but she looked upon him with gratitude—she thanked him with tears. The cripple started—his heart burned. To be gazed on with kindness, to be thanked, and with tears, and by one so fair, so young, so beautiful, was to him so strange, so new, he half doubted the reality of the scene before him. Before the kindness and gratitude that beamed from her eyes, the

misanthropy that had frozen up his bosom began to dissolve, and the gloom on his features died away, as a vapour before the face of the morning sun. New thoughts fired his imagination—new feelings transfixed his heart. Her smile fell like a sunbeam on his soul, where light had never before dawned; her accents of gratitude, from the moment they were delivered, became the music of his memory. He found an object on the earth that he could love—or shall we say that he *did* love; for he felt as though already her existence were mysteriously linked to his. We are no believers in what is termed *love at first sight*. Some romance-writers hold it up as an established doctrine, and love-sick boys and moping girls will make oath to the creed. But there never was love at first sight that a week's perseverance could not wear away. It holds no intercourse with the heart, but is a mere *fancy* of the eye; as a man would fancy a horse, a house, or a picture, which he desires to purchase. Love is not the offspring of an hour or a day, nor is it the *ignis fatuus* which plays about the brain, and disturbs the sleep of the youth and the maiden in their teens. It slowly steals and dawns upon the heart, as day imperceptibly creeps over the earth, first with the tinged cloud—the grey and the clearer dawn—the approaching, the rising, and the risen sun—blending into each other a brighter and a brighter shade; but each indistinguishable in their progress and blending, as the motion of the pointers on a watch, which move unobserved as time flies, and we mark not the silent progress of light till it envelop us in its majesty. Such is the progress of pure, holy, and enduring love. It springs not from mere sight, but its radiance grows with esteem; it is the whisper of sympathy, unity of feeling, and mutual reverence, which increases with a knowledge of each other, until but one pulse seems to throb in two bosoms. The feelings which now swelled in the bosom of Ebenezer Baird were not the true and only love which springs from es-

teen, but they were akin to it. For though the beauty of the fair being he had rescued had struck his eye, it was not her beauty that melted the misanthropy of his heart, but the tear of gratitude, the voice of thanks, the glance that turned not away from him, the smile—the first that woman had bestowed on him—that entered his soul. They came from the heart, and they spoke to the heart.

She informed him that her name was Maria Bradbury, and that she was one of the party then on a visit to the gentleman in his neighbourhood. He offered to accompany her to the house, and she accepted his offer. But it was necessary to pass near the spot where he had rescued her from the fury of the enraged bull. As they drew towards the side of the wood, they perceived that the bull was gone, but the noble mastiff, the friend, companion, and defender of the cripple, lay dead before them. Ebenezer wrung his hands, he mourned over his faithful guardian.

“Friend! poor Friend!” he cried (the name of the mastiff was Friend), “hast thou, too, left me? Thou, of all the things that lived, alone didst love thy master! Pardon me, lady, pardon an outcast; but until this hour I have never experienced friendship from man nor kindness from woman. The human race have treated me as a thing that belonged not to the same family with themselves; they have persecuted or mocked me, and I have hated them. Start not—hatred is an alien to my soul—it was not born there, it was forced upon it—but I hate not you—no! no! You have spoken kindly to me, you have smiled on me!—the despised, the disowned Ebenezer will remember you. That poor dog alone, of all living things, showed affection for me. But he died in a good cause! Poor Friend! poor Friend!—where shall I find a companion now?” and the tears of the cripple ran down his cheeks as he spoke.

Maria wept also, partly for the fate of the noble animal

that had died in her deliverance, and partly from the sorrow of her companion; for there is a sympathy in tears.

“Ha! you weep!” cried the cripple; “you weep for poor Friend and for me. Bless thee—bless thee, fair one! they are the first that were ever shed for my sake! I thought there was not a tear on earth for me.”

He accompanied her to the lodge of the mansion where she was then residing, and there he left her, though she invited him to accompany her, that he might also receive the congratulations of her friends.

She related to them her deliverance. “Ha! little Ebenezer turned a hero!” cried one; “Ebenezer the cripple become a knight-errant!” said another. But they resolved to visit him in a body, and return him their thanks.

But the soul of the deformed was now changed, and his countenance, though still melancholy, had lost its asperity: His days became a dream, his existence a wish. For the first time he entertained the hope of happiness; it was vain, romantic, perhaps we might say absurd, but he cherished it.

Maria spoke much of the courage, the humanity, the seeming loneliness, and the knowledge of the deformed, to her friends; and their entertainer, with his entire party of visitors, with but one exception, a few days afterwards, proceeded to the cottage of Ebenezer, to thank him for his intrepidity. The exception we have alluded to was a Lady Helen Dorrington, a woman of a proud and haughty temper, and whose personal attractions, if she ever possessed any, were now disfigured by the attacks of a violent temper, and the *crow-feet* and the *wrinkles* which threescore years imprint on the fairest countenance. She excused herself by saying, that the sight of deformed people affected her. Amongst the party who visited the cripple was her son, Francis Dorrington, a youth of two-and-twenty, who was haughty, fiery, and impetuous as his mother. He sought

the hand of Maria Bradbury, and he now walked by her side.

Ebenezer received them coldly; amongst them were some who were wont to mock him as they passed, and he now believed that they had come to gratify curiosity, by gazing on his person as on a wild animal. But, when he saw the smile upon Maria's lips, the benign expression of her glance, and her hand held forth to greet him, his coldness vanished, and joy, like a flash of sunshine, lighted up his features. Yet he liked not the impatient scowl with which Francis Dorrington regarded her attention towards him, nor the contempt which moved visibly on his lip, when she listened delighted to the words of the despised cripple. He seemed to act as though her eyes should be fixed on him alone—her words addressed only to him. Jealousy entered the soul of the deformed; and shall we say that the same feeling was entertained by the gay and the haughty Dorrington? It was. He felt that, insignificant as the outward appearance of the cripple was, his soul was that of an intellectual giant, before the exuberance of whose power the party were awed, and Maria lost in admiration. His tones were musical as his figure was unsightly, and his knowledge universal as his person was diminutive. He discoursed with a poet's tongue on the beauty of the surrounding scenery; he defined the botany and geology of the mountains. He traced effect to cause, and both to their Creator. The party marvelled while the deformed spoke; and he repelled the scowl and contempt of his rival with sarcasm that scathed like passing lightning. These things produced feelings of jealousy also in the breast of Francis Dorrington; though from Maria Bradbury he had never received one smile of encouragement. On their taking leave, the entertainer of the party invited Ebenezer to his house, but the latter refused; he feared to mingle with society, for oft as he had associated with man, he had been ren-

dered their sport—the thing they persecuted—the butt of their irony.

For many days the cripple met, or rather sought, Maria in his solitary rambles; for she, too, loved the solitude of the mountains or the silence of the woods, which is broken only by the plaintive note of the wood-pigeon, the *chirm* of the linnet, the song of the thrush, the twitter of the chaffinch, or the distant stroke of the woodman, lending silence a charm. She had become familiar with his deformity, and as it grew less singular to her eyes, his voice became sweeter to her ears. Their conversation turned on many things—there was wisdom in his words, and she listened to him as a pupil to a preceptor. His feelings deepened with their interviews, his hopes brightened, and felicity seemed dawning before him. As hope kindled, he acquired confidence. They were walking together, he had pointed out the beauties and explained the properties of the wild-flowers on their path, he had dwelt on the virtues of the humblest weed, when he stopped short, and gazing in her face—“Maria!” he added, “I have loved these flowers—I have cherished those simple weeds, because they shunned me not—they shrank not from me, as did the creatures of the human race—they spread their beauties before me—they denied me not their sweetness. You only have I met with among the children of Adam, who persecuted me not with ridicule, or who insulted not my deformity with the vulgar gaze of curiosity. Who I am I know not—from whence I was brought amongst these hills I cannot tell; I am a thing which the world has laughed at, and of which my parents were ashamed. But my wants have been few. I have gold to purchase flattery, if I desired it—to buy tongues to tell me I am not deformed; but I despise them. My soul partakes not of my body’s infirmities—it has sought a spirit to love, that would love it in return. Maria, has it found one?”

Maria was startled—she endeavoured to speak, but her

tongue faltered—tears gathered in her eyes, and her looks bespoke pity and astonishment.

“Fool! fool!” exclaimed the cripple, “I have been deceived! Maria *pities* me!—*only pities me!* Hate me, Maria—despise me as does the world. I can bear hatred—I can endure scorn—I can repel them!—but *pity* consumes me!—and *pity* from you! Fool! fool!” he added, “wherefore dreamed I there was one that would look with love on deformed Ebenezer? Farewell, Maria! farewell!—remember, but do not pity me!” and he hurried from her side.

She would have detained him—she would have told him that she revered him—that she esteemed him; but he hastened away, and she felt also that she *pitied* him—and *love* and *pity* can never dwell in the same breast for the same object. Maria stood and wept.

Ebenezer returned to his cottage; but the hope which he had cherished, the dream which he had fed, died reluctantly. He accused himself for acting precipitately—he believed he had taken the tear of affection for pity. His heart was at war with itself. Day after day he revisited the mountain-side, and the path in the wood where they had met; but Maria wandered there no longer. His feelings, his impatience, his incertitude, rose superior to the ridicule of man; he resolved to visit the mansion of his neighbour, where Maria and her friends were residing. The dinner-bell was ringing as he approached the house; but he knew little of the etiquette of the world, and respected not its forms. The owner of the mansion welcomed him with the right hand of cordiality, for his discourse in the cottage had charmed him; others expressed welcome, for some who before had mocked now respected him; and Maria took his hand with a look of joy and her wonted sweetness. The heart of Ebenezer felt assured. Francis Dorrington alone frowned, and rose not to welcome him.

The dinner-bell again rang; the Lady Helen had not

arrived, and dinner was delayed for her, but she came not. They proceeded to the dining-room. Ebenezer offered his arm to Maria, and she accepted it. Francis Dorrington muttered angry words between his teeth. The dinner passed—the dessert was placed upon the table—Lady Helen entered the room—she prayed to be excused for her delay—her host rose to introduce her to Ebenezer.

“Ebenezer!—the deformed!” she exclaimed, in a tone of terror, and, dashing her hands before her eyes, as he rose before her, she fell back in hysterics.

“Turn the monster from the house!” cried Francis Dorrington, springing forward; “my mother cannot endure the sight of such.”

“Whom call ye monster, young man?” said Ebenezer, angrily.

“You, wretch!” replied Dorrington, raising his hand, and striking the cripple to the floor.

“Shame! shame!” exclaimed the company.

“Coward!” cried Maria, starting from her seat.

The cripple, with a rapidity that seemed impossible, sprang to his feet—he gasped, he trembled, every joint shook, rage boiled in his veins—he glanced at his insulter, who attempted to repeat the blow—he uttered a yell of vengeance, he clutched a dessert-knife from the table, and within a moment it was plunged in the body of the man who had injured him.

A scream of horror burst from the company. Ebenezer, with the reeking knife in his grasp, stood trembling from rage, not from remorse. But he offered not to repeat the blow. A half-consciousness of what he had done seemed to stay his hand. The sudden scream of the party aroused the Lady Helen from her real or affected fit. She beheld her son bleeding on the floor—she saw the vengeful knife in the hands of the cripple. She screamed more wildly than before—she wrung her hands!

"Monster!—murderer!" she exclaimed, "he has slain—he *has slain his brother!*"

"*My brother!*" shouted Ebenezer, still grasping the knife in his hand. "Woman—woman! mother—mother!—who am I? Answer me—who are you?" and he sprang forward, and held her by the arm. "Tell me," he continued, "what mean ye—what mean ye? *My brother*—do ye say *my brother*? Art thou *my mother*? Have I a *mother*? Speak—speak!" and he grasped her arm more fiercely.

"Monster!" she repeated, "offspring of my shame!—away—away! *He is thy brother!* I have shunned thee, wretch, I have disowned thee; but thou hast carried murder to my bosom!" and, tearing her arm from his grasp, she threw it round the neck of her wounded son.

The company gazed upon each other. Ebenezer stood for a moment, his eyes rolling, his teeth rattling together, the knife shaking in his hand. He uttered a wild cry of agony—he tore the garments from his breast, as though it were ready to burst, and, with the look and the howl of a maniac, he sprang to the door, and disappeared. Some from an interest in his fate, others from a desire to secure him, followed after him. But he fled to the woods, and they traced him not.

It was found that the wound of Francis Dorrington was not mortal; and the fears of the company were directed from him to Ebenezer, who they feared had laid violent hands upon his own life.

On the following day, without again meeting the company, Lady Helen left the house, having acknowledged the deformed Ebenezer to be her son—a child of shame—whose birth had been concealed from the world.

On the third day, the poor cripple was found by a shepherd wandering on the hills. His head was uncovered; his garments and his body were torn by the brambles through which he had rushed; his eyes rolled wildly, and, when ac-

costed, he fled, exclaiming, "I am Cain! I am Cain! I have slain my brother! Touch me not—the mark is on my forehead!" He was secured, and taken to a place of safety.

The circumstances twined round Maria's heart; she heard no more of Ebenezer the cripple, but she forgot him not. Several years passed, and she, together with a friend, visited a lunatic asylum in a distant part of the country, in which a female acquaintance, once the admired of society, had become an inmate. They were shown round the different wards; some of the inmates seemed happy, others melancholy, but all were mild—all shrank from the eye of their keeper. The sound of the clanking chains around their ankles filled Maria's soul with horror, and she longed to depart; but the keeper invited them to visit the garden of his asylum. They entered, and beheld several quiet-looking people engaged in digging; others were pruning trees; and some sat upon benches on the paths, playing with their fingers, striking their heels upon the ground, or reading stray leaves of an old book or a newspaper. Each seemed engaged with himself, none conversed with his neighbour. Upon a bench near the entrance to a small arbour or summer-house sat a female, conning an old ballad; and, as she perused it, she laughed, wept, and sang by turns. Maria stopped to converse with her, and her friend entered the arbour. In it sat a grey-headed and deformed man; he held a volume of *Savage* in his hand, which had then been but a short time published.

"I am reading the 'Bastard,' by *Savage*," said he, as the stranger entered; "he is my favourite author. His fate was mine—he describes my feelings. He had an unnatural mother—so had I. He was disowned—so was I. He slew a man, and so did I; but I my brother."

The voice, the words, fell upon Maria's ear. She became pale, she glanced towards the arbour, she cast an inquiring look upon the keeper.

"Fear not, ma'am," he replied; "he is an innocent creature. He does not rave now; and but that there is an occasional wildness in his language, he is as well as you are. Enter and converse with him, ma'am; he is a great speaker and to much purpose, too, as visitors tell me."

She entered the arbour. The cripple's eyes met hers and he threw down the book.

"Maria—Maria!" he exclaimed, "this is kind! this kind, indeed! But do not *pity* me—do not *pity me again*. Hate me, Maria! you saw me slay my brother!"

She informed him that his brother was not dead—that he had recovered within a few weeks.

"Not dead!" replied the cripple. "Thank Heaven! Ebenezer is not a murderer! But I am well now—the fever of my brain is passed. Go, Maria, do this for me—it is all I now ask—inquire why I am here immured, and by whose authority. Suffer not my reason to be buried in reason's tomb, and crushed among its wrecks. Your smile, your words of kindness, your tears of gratitude, caused me to dream once, and its remembrance is still as a speck of light amidst the darkness of my bosom; but these grey hairs have broken the dream." And Ebenezer bent his head upon his breast, and sighed.

Maria and her friend left the asylum, but in a few weeks they returned, and when they again departed, Ebenezer Baird went with them. He now sought not Maria's love, but he was gratified with her esteem, and that of her friends. He outlived the persecution of his kindred and the derision of the world; and in the forty-sixth year of his age he died in peace, and bequeathed his property to Maria Bradbury—the first of the human race that had looked on him with kindness, or cheered him with a smile.

THE LEGEND OF FAIR HELEN OF KIRCONNEL.

THE seat of a branch of the Dumfries-shire Maxwells—Kirconnel—a property lying not far distant from Dumfries, and surrounded by the little pastoral stream, Kirtle—is one of the most beautiful that ever gratified the taste or inspired the pride of a high family. It was not until about the beginning of the seventeenth century that it came into the possession of the Maxwells; for, during a long period, it belonged to the old, though never illustrious, family of the Bells, who, amidst all the turmoil and strife of the March territories, had the good sense to prefer the quiet pleasures of the retreats of their own pure Kirtle, to the tumultuous and cruel scenes which boasted no streamlet but the heart's blood of contending foes. The power of Lord Maxwell, or the threat of Douglas, were equally unavailing to force the old proprietor of Kirconnel—though he ranked as a lesser baron, and might command retainers to fight for his plea—to sacrifice the pleasures of domestic peace on the altars of Laverna or Bellona: these conjunct goddesses who, hand in hand, swayed the destinies of Border men, and regulated the Border rights of mine and thine. He held his fine property directly of the crown; and, so long as he fulfilled the conditions of his right, he conceived himself entitled to the enjoyment of what had been fairly got and honourably retained. One strong element in Kirconnel's determination to live at home, in the enjoyment of what home may produce to a mind capable of appreciating its sweets, was the fear of interrupting the happiness of his lady—one of the family of Irvings in that quarter, who latterly came to possess his property—and of one child, a daughter, the Maid of

Kirconnel, concerning whom, as all our readers know, more has been said and sung by antiquarian minstrel than ever fell to the hapless fame or treasured memory of fair woman. Ah, we need scarcely say, that this young heiress of Kirconnel's name was Helen; for who that has read the touching lines of Pinkerton can ever forget the appellation of one whose fate has drawn more tears than ever did that of the heroine Lady Margaret, in the old ballad of "Douglas' Tragedy?" The disasters of ordinary women, though halloed by the sanctifying power of love, have seldom in this country inspired the harp of the minstrel; so far we are forced to admit the power of beauty, abstracted from the qualities of the mind and heart, that it has been a talisman to bardic genius in every age; yet it is honourable to the character of our nation, that the soul which illumines the "face divine" has called forth strains as melting and triumphant as ever resulted from the effects of physical beauty. It is, however, when the two qualities have been found combined in a favoured daughter of Scotland, that an unhappy fate has called forth a sympathy which has left no harp to sound fitfully in the willow-tree, no heart in our true land untouched, no eye destitute of sympathetic tears. Such has truly been the effect produced by the fortune of Helen of Kirconnel—a fortune which came up on the revolving wheel of the mutable goddess, notwithstanding all the efforts of her father to make the course of her life happy, and its termination blessed. Abstracted as the thoughts were of the three inhabitants of Kirconnel—the lady, the laird, and the daughter—from the scenes that were ever changing in the warlike world around them, so much greater was the necessity for cultivating the opportunities of enjoyment that nature and fortune had awarded to them; and so much greater also was the relish for that enjoyment which has ever been found in minds and hearts properly constituted and tuned to the harp of goodness, to increase with posses-

sion as much as the false taste for stimulating avocations cloy with the easy surfeit. It is not often, even in our virtuous land, and even in these days when the blessings of a high civilisation have inclined mankind to the cultivation of the social affections, that a family is found with its different members so predisposed for the harmony of exclusively domestic joys, that some chord does not occasionally give forth a discordant sound when touched by an external impulse; but, in the times of which we speak, and in the district where the individuals resided, "the happy family" was a group that was more often found in the lyrics of the poet or the creations of hope deferred than in the real existences of the troubled and vexed world.

The house of Kirconnel stood on "fair Kirconnel Lee;" a term implying that the wood, which in those days encompassed every baronial residence, had been, to a certain extent, cleared away, to allow the daisy-covered lawn to rejoice in the beams of the generally excluded sun. But, at a little distance, the empire of the forest was again resumed, on the condition exacted by nature, of allowing the winding Kirtle to enjoy her grassy bank, covered with the wild rose and the eglantine; and to roll playfully along her pebbly bed, unimpeded by the neighbouring trees, which, as if in amatory dalliance, sent down their straggling lips to kiss her as she went. The wood bower—in early times a species of rural retreat in much greater fashion than now-a-days—was, in repetition of itself, seen rearing its ornamented walls, round which the native parasite plants were entwined in close embrace in various parts of the shady retreat. Some of these had been carefully looked to by the lady of Kirconnel herself, who, anxious to confirm her husband's resolution against engaging in the wars of the times, left no energy unemployed to render their residence, not only within the walls of the house, but in the bowers and gardens, as pleasant to the eye as the fruits of her heart and mind were delightful to the

rational and loving soul of her appreciating and grateful lord. As Sir Owain says:—

“ Fair were her erbers with flowers—
Rose and lili divers colours,
Primrol and parvink;
Mint, feverfoi, and eglantine,
Colimbin, and mo there were,
Than ani man mocht think.”

True; the Graces had, as yet, but small influence in Scotland; but the Genius of Chivalry, a cognate spirit, was busy in effecting a great revolution in the minds of the inhabitants; and though there was little to humanise, there was much to elevate and beautify. Traces of this power might already be seen about the bowers and shades of Kirconnel, where some rude figures of knights in various positions—one rescuing a damsel from her enemies—one in the combat at outrance—one striking the palisades of an armed city—placed, as they were, in the retreats of peace and domestic happiness by a former warlike possessor of the property, served the purpose of ornamenting the sequestered walks, and supplying to the peaceful and happy inhabitants a contrast between the pursuits of war and the pleasures of home, and home's blessed enjoyments.

At a little distance from the mansion or castle—for every house, in those days, had a castellated character—was, and still is, the burying-ground of Kirconnel; a spot which, from the peculiarity of its situation, as well as from its own mournful associations, impressed the mind of the visiter with feelings which startled him, as much from their novelty as from their intensity. There is a small stone there, that would, if deciphered and communicated to our readers, anticipate our story, and claim the ready tear before our own sympathies are relieved by our recital. We pass it by at present, to give some idea of the extraordinary spot where it lies. This ground of the dead, or “Death's Mailing,” as

it has sometimes been called, is invested with all the *charms* of a sublimed melancholy, which contemplates nature as a whole, and looks to those high purposes of her great author in visiting poor mortals with their heart-chastening woes. At the time of which we speak, this place of the dead was entirely surrounded with high oaks and spreading elms, except where the silvery Kirtle embraced the hallowed spot, as she rolled slowly along—more slowly, it might almost appear, at this spot than elsewhere—and murmured a soft threnody in the ears of the guardian spirits, that there tended the clay forms which they once animated. A few very rude stones, whose rudeness was their greatest recommendation to the sentimental mind, told, in the quaint “old Inglis” of that day, their simple tale. “Here lyethe the race of ye sons of Kirconnelle,” might have been seen on a rude free-stone that has long since disappeared. “Terraughtie did choose to lie her,” appeared upon another old relic; and some exhibited more simple tokens—still pointing out nothing more than name and surname, yet more eloquent in that brevity than the most “storied urn.” “Jon Kirkpatrick,” “Andrew Welles,” “Heln Johnston,” “Mary of the Le’,” without one word more to say what they were, where they lived, when they visited this scene of sorrow, and when they departed from it, possessed an eloquence in their simple brevity that moved the heart of the visiter with a power now little felt and less appreciated. The swelling green tumuli, with these simple-speaking, grey-headed stones, standing, yet leaning to a side, as if themselves bent by the hands of time, how humbly might they appear, encircled as they were, with the proud monarch of the wood, the primeval oak, that had seen the sires and grandsires of the lowly inhabitants of “Death’s Mailing” rise and fall, and become dust, as man contemplates the day-fly wing forth in the morning, live out its day, and die. Such was the romantic burying-place of Kirconnel at the time of which we speak;

and even now, when the oak has fallen before the axe of civilisation, and Fame's trump has sounded even over the tomb, the place has a hallowed and romantic character (the Kirtle is still there) not exhibited by other burying-grounds in Scotland.

In those retreats, the members of the family of Kirconnel passed the greater part of their time. Helen, though a lover of home, was fond of gratifying a fancy pregnant of beautiful images, and a taste for what is lovely in nature, by sitting by the banks of the Kirtle, and supplying her mind with the pabulum of the old Scottish romances. "Raf Coilyear and his Cross-bow," and "Gilbert with the White Hand," though soon superseded by the continental romances, were then the legitimate fountains of amusement to the fair maids of Scotland; and those who aimed at sublimer flights, might have had recourse to "Fyn Maccowl," or "Gret Gow Macmorne;" but there was in none of the works as yet circulated in Scotland, what might gratify the intense yearnings of the female heart for those poetical images which subsequently sprang up with the more mature growth of chivalry. The loves of warriors are not the loves of everyday life, far less the loves of the inspired poet; and Helen, as she read these old legendary romances, might find in them the amusement that afforded a relaxing alternative to her own poetical communings with the oldest bard of all—Nature; but for the inspiration of love itself she required the talisman—man—in that high aspect she had prefigured of the noblest of God's creatures, to rouse her heart from nature to the lover's dream.

As yet the Maid of Kirconnel had not seen any one that realised the idea she had formed, by the banks of the Kirtle, of the individual who could call up in her young bosom those extraordinary emotions which constitute "love's young dream." The secluded mode of life adopted by her parents was unfavourable to a choice of the talismanic ob-

jects; and it even appeared to be her father and mother's wish that such choice should be excluded, that her heart might, in the absence of many forms, learn to be pleased with the man whom their love or policy might point out to her adoption. A second cousin of her own, Walter Bell of Blacket House, had a free passport to the hall of Kirconnel, as well as to the bowers that were enshrined in Kirconnel woods. The laird saw in the young man his nearest heir, in the event of his Helen being taken from him by fate; and the lady could detect, as she thought, in Bell's quiet and sombre manner, some assimilation to her own love of retirement and ease, and a consequent disrelish of the warlike and sanguinary customs of the times. Yet it was known that the young laird of Blacket House had been engaged in secret frays between the Johnstones and Crichtons; while, for some purpose not generally known, though, from what we have said, not difficult to be surmised, he had fought in disguise, and disclaimed the glory of having hewn off the heads of many Johnstones, whose deaths might have brought him renown, if not wealth. He had fought from a spirit of animosity and a thirst of blood that lay deep buried in his heart, but which, along with its noisome fruits, he had striven to conceal, from the knowledge he possessed of the pacific disposition of his friends the Kirconnels, whose good-will he had a motive to cultivate more powerful than that of wealth or glory. He wished to recommend himself to the fair Helen, by acquiring the love and esteem of her father and mother; and he doubted not that, by his own personal accomplishments—neither few nor unimportant—aided by the advice or power of parental love and authority, he would succeed in changing in her the old habitual feelings of ordinary friendship into the higher and purer sentiments of affection.

And sure it was that no one who ever aimed to acquire a "ladye's love," made his attempt with more advantages

on his side than Walter Bell of Blacket House. The gay lover in the old romance, who cried that, with the advantage of making love in a wood, and by the side of a silver stream, he would gain the heart of the fairest woman of Christendom, though his face were as black as the coal slave's, and his lineage no better than the knave-child's, spoke more of human nature than he himself perhaps knew. But he spoke of women in the aggregate; and it is not unlikely that such a woman as fair Helen of Kirconnel had never come under the trial of his skill. The truth of the statement fell to be tested by one who, besides the advantages stated by the gay knight, could boast the consent of a father, old friendship, and a face and a lineage against which no exception could be taken by the admirers of graces and genealogy. Bell was aware of the advantages he possessed; but he could calculate the strength of these better than he could fathom the mysteries of woman's heart. Although the greater part of his time was passed at Kirconnel, where he took every opportunity of threading the mazes of the oak woods, or sitting by the side of the Kirtle, with the object of his affections, it is doubtful if he ever ascertained, by the passing indications she exhibited, that her thoughts and feelings were pitched much beyond the grade of those which nature had awarded to himself. She saw and felt beauties in the scenery of Kirconnel, which to her lover were but as the "sear leaf." Every object in nature—from the planet to the plant, from the shining levin of heaven to the phosphoric beam on the margin of the Kirtle—had some intelligence for her inquiring eye. Every power in operation around her—from the general sympathy of nature's highest elements, to the loves of the little forest birds that sung their love-song in her bower—had some charm to elevate her thoughts and sublime her sentiments. She, therefore, who could search for intelligence where others saw nothing but inert matter, or,

at least, the uninteresting indications of everyday nature, might probably have been an unfortunate object on whom our said romantic knight might try the effect of his extraneous charms of wood and water. Nor was she at all fitted for being acted upon by the love intrigues of her cousin of Blacket House, who, coming far short of a knowledge of the elevated sentiments by which she was inspired, could neither yield her that sympathy which she required as a *sine qua non* of affection, nor stand the investigation of the shrewd wisdom or the high philosophy of the heart of an elevated woman. While he simply sued and used the ordinary words of love, she analysed, and found that, where she never could be understood, she never could dispose of her affections.

The mind of Helen had long been made up on the question of her cousin's suit. It had begun early; and the innumerable walks he had enjoyed with her along the banks of the Kirtle had afforded him a thousand opportunities of declaring his feelings. By the natural tact of women, she had always contrived to evade the question, and contented herself, even in the midst of extravagant declarations, with negative indications of her inability to return his passion. These he understood not; and, unfortunately, he acted upon the principle that has driven many a fond lover to despair—that the mistress who appears to listen without displeasure is presumed to give a tacit consent. They know little of the heart of woman who trust their happiness or their lives to the frail bark of such a fond and dangerous delusion. A woman will seldom put an end to the adulation that supports her pride; but the Maid of Kirconnel, who had no pride to gratify, acted as many a single-hearted female has done and will do, who receives without a frown that her nature detests, but without a satisfaction that her honesty will not allow her to assume, the fond speeches of an old friend, couched in terms of an admiration which is only her

due. The native sensibility of her soul shrank at the thought of first construing harshly her relative's professions of affection, and then telling him that he was not the individual who was qualified to win her heart. Yet, in justice to her, it requires to be stated, that she often communed with herself, in her solitary walks, on the necessity of checking her cousin's fond and unfortunate delusion, lest evil might come out of gentleness so nearly allied to good.

This unfortunate connection between Blacket House and his fair cousin, fated as it was to continue, assumed daily a more critical aspect. The young man, overwhelmed by a passion that was daily and hourly fed by the contemplation of a beauty and qualities seldom before witnessed in a Scottish maiden, was not only intoxicated by the violence of his love, but satisfied that his cousin, in return, loved him with an affection only more chastely expressed, though, of course, not less powerful than his own. Her parents, too, who had lent a fond and willing ear to his statements of their daughter's love for him, had made up their minds upon a point which presented all the appearances of being sealed and settled by her who had the greatest interest in its truth. She was always to be found by him in her solitary walks among Kirconnel woods. Their meetings were favoured by their parents; their walks were uninterrupted; the current of his passion flowed without check, and his expressions only varied in becoming more animated. The absence of a *harsh denial* filled the measure of a deluding, blending hope; and while the courses of their two minds were in directions entirely opposite—his along the rose-strewn valley of a requited affection; hers in a channel that led to objects too brilliant for his dull eye to scan, and too sublime for his unfledged fancy to reach—he conceived that a mutual sympathy of congenial feeling animated both their hearts.

It was at this extraordinary state of the domestic affairs of Kirconnel that an extraneous cause gave a new current to the feelings of the young maiden, without having the effect of changing that of her lover, or of opening the eyes of her father and mother to the true fact, that she could not love the man they intended as her husband. A gallant, high-spirited youth, one of the Flemings of Kirkpatrick, had followed a doe up to within a very short space of Kirconnel House. The timid creature had taken to the water, and, springing on the opposite bank, fled past a bower in which Helen was at the time sitting reading "Sir Tristram," then in the hands of every young lady in Scotland and England. She started as the creature shot past her, and, putting her head timidly forward, to get a better view of the fleet inhabitant of the forest, saw before her, with cap in hand, bowing, in knightly guise, Adam Fleming of Kirkpatrick. Neither of the two had before seen the other; but the fame of the one's noble mien, high mind, and martial virtues, and of the other's incomparable beauty and elevation of sentiment, had reached reciprocally their willing ears.

"That a Fleming of Kirkpatrick," said the youth, still bowing humbly, and smiling, "should have had the boldness to interpose the image of his worthless person between the fancy and the heaven of the meditations of fair Helen of Kirconnel, doth, by my sword, require an apology. Shall I be still bolder in asking a pardon?"

The effect produced on Helen's mind by the noble figure of the youth, and the romantic and playful turn he had given to his intrusion, was quick and heartfelt. It was, besides, simultaneous with the memory of his spread fame; and in an instant her face was in a glow of mixed shame and confusion, the causes of which, perhaps, lay deeper than the influence of a mere feeling of surprise or interruption.

“You have my full forgiveness, sir,” she replied, while her face glowed deeper, in spite of her efforts to appear unaffected.

Her soft musical voice fell on the ear of the youth; but his keen, dark eye was busy with the examination of charms with which his ear had been long familiar. The blush of a woman is a man’s triumph; whatever may be its secret cause, the man will construe it favourably to himself, in the face of a denial of his power; and so far at least he has the right, that nature herself evidences in his favour, by an acknowledgment that he has touched the fountains of the heart. Fleming was not different from other men; and, though he might have been wrong in his construction of the secret moving impulse which called up the mantling adornment of beauty that was almost beyond the power of increase, he felt the full influence of the effect he thought he had produced, and, conceiving himself favourably received, laid in his heart the germs of an affection that was to govern his destiny. The forms of breeding, more punctilious in those days of chivalry than even now, forbade farther communication at that time, and, bowing gracefully as he drank up the rays of her blushing beauty, he bounded away after his dogs, that had kept their course in pursuit of the flying doe.

This was the first time that ever Helen had seen a stranger huntsman cross Kirconnel Lee in pursuit of his game; but it was soon to appear that roes and does, when pursued by the gallant Fleming, seemed to think that in the recesses of Kirconnel they might find that safety which was denied them in other coverts; at least it became certain that more of that kind of game fled before the hunter over Kirconnel Lee, after the meeting we have described, than ever were seen before by man or maiden. Meanwhile the image of the noble youth, with his clear, intelligent eye, his rising and expanded forehead, from which his

Black hair was shaded to a side, and mixed with the long flowing locks that reached down to his shoulders; his intellectual expression of countenance, where beauty sat enshrined among the virtues, his breeding, his modesty, his voice and general bearing—were all busy with the fancy of the Maid of Kirconnel. Nature's talisman had been applied, and the charm had wrought in its highest and most mysterious power. Nor less had been the effect of that first meeting on the mind of the youthful heir of Kirkpatrick. They loved; and the does which afterwards brushed over Kirconnel Lee were only the scouts of the hunting lover, who, while he could not help the choice of the flying wilding in taking that direction, could not, of a consequence, avoid a repeated *intrusion* on the wood-bower privacy of her who longed to see him with a heart that palpitated at his coming as strongly as did that of the flying deer. The rules of breeding direct all their force against a first interview; against a second, though brought about in the same way as the first, they have no efficacy; and love, which defies the whole code, soon reconciled differences which he despised. A few meetings revealed to each other the fact—which, somehow or other, is discovered by nobody but lovers—that one person has been intended from the beginning of the world to be formed for another. The heir of Kirkpatrick and the Maid of Kirconnel exhibited to each other such a similarity of thought, feeling, and sentiment, that love seemed to have nothing more to do than to tie those threads which nature had not only spun, but hung forth with a predisposed reciprocity of communication. The discovery that their thoughts had taken the same range, and reached an equal altitude of elevation, carried with it that pleasant surprise that is always favourable to the progress of the tender passion; and the delight of a new-born sympathy in sentiments that had long gratified only the heart in which they were conceived, but

which now were seen glowing in the eyes of another, was only another form of that passion itself.

Though Helen had seen many indications that might have satisfied her (if her mind had been directed to the subject) that her father and mother were bent upon a match between her cousin of Blacket House and her, she had never, either from a want of courage or steady serious thought on the subject, put it to herself what was her precise predicament or condition, on the supposition of such circumstance being in itself true and irremediable. She had hitherto had no great need for secrecy, because she did not love another; and her father, mother, and lover, having taken it for granted that she was favourable to her cousin's suit, nothing of a definite nature had ever transpired to call for a demonstration on her part, as an alternative of dishonesty and double-dealing. Her situation was now changed. She now loved, and loved ardently, another; and the necessity she felt of meeting the heir of Kirkpatrick in secret, brought out in full relief her inmost sense of what were the views and purposes of her father and mother, and all the responsibility of her negative conduct, as regarded the suit of him she could never love. But, strange as it may seem, if she felt a difficulty in correcting her cousin and disobeying her parents before the accession of her love, she felt that difficulty rise to an impossibility after that important event of her life. She trembled at the thought of her love being crossed: one word of her rejection of the suit of her cousin would reach the ears of her parents; dissension would be thrown into the temple of peace; her love would be discovered; her lover, a man famous in arms, and an aider of the Johnstones, the opponents of Blacket House, traced, rejected, and banished; and her heart finally torn and broken by the antagonist powers of love and duty. She felt her own weakness, and trembled at it, without coming to a resolution to make a

disclosure; while her overwhelming love carried her, on the moonlight nights, over Kirconnel Lee, to meet her faithful Heir of Kirkpatrick in the romantic burying-ground already described. This extraordinary place was that fixed upon by the lovers for their night meetings; for in any other part of the domains of Kirconnel they could not have escaped the eye of Blacket House; who, though he had no suspicion of a rival, was so often in search of the object of his engrossing passion, that she seldom went out without being observed by the ever-waking and vigilant surveillance of love.

Many times already had Helen waited till her unconscious parents retired to the rest of the aged, and the moon threw her sheet of silver over Kirconnel Lee, and, wrapped up in a night-cloak, slipped out at the wicket-gate of the west enclosure, to seek, under the shades of the oaks, Death's Mailing, the appointed trysting-place of the ardent lovers. Again she was to see her beloved Heir of Kirkpatrick, and at last she had resolved to break to him the painful position in which she was placed by the still existing belief of her parents and Blacket House, that she was to be his wedded wife. On this occasion, she sat wistfully looking out at her chamber window. Her father and mother had retired to their couch. Everything was quiet, the wind stilled, and the mighty oaks whispered not the faintest sigh to disturb the sensitive ear of night. The moon was already up, and she was on the eve of wrapping her cloak round her, and creeping forth into the forest shade, when she observed the long shadow of a man extending many yards upon the shining grass of the green lee. The figure of the individual she could not see; for a projection of the building, sufficient to conceal him, but not to prevent his shadow from being revealed, interrupted her vision. She hesitated and trembled. If the shadow had moved and disappeared, she could have accounted for it, by supposing

that some of the domestics had not yet retired to bed; but why should a man stand alone and stationary at that hour, in that place, in that position? Her fears ran all upon Blacket House, who was never happy but when in her presence or near her person; and who had been, on a former occasion, reported by the servants to have lain and slept under her window for an entire night, and never left his position till the morning sun exposed the doting lover to the wondering eyes of the domestics, who had never yet felt a love that kept them awake for more than a dreamy hour at cockcrow. As she gazed and hesitated, her hour was passing, and her lover would be among the grave-stones, waiting for her. Her anxiety grew intense; she feared to go, but shook at the thoughts of disappointing *him*; never dreaming (so whispered love) of herself. The figure still stood as stationary as a grave-stone, while her soul was agitated like the restless spirit that hovers over it, sighing for the hour of departure to the regions of ether. She could bear no longer; the projection which concealed him would conceal her; she plied the furtive steps of love; and crossing, like a fairy on the moonlit green knowe, the rising lawn, was forth among the towering oaks in as little time as the shadow of a passing cloud would have taken to trail its dingy traces over the shining lee.

In a short time she arrived at the churchyard, and saw, through the interstices of the surrounding trees, the Heir of Kirkpatrick sitting on a green tumulus, the grave of one who had perhaps loved as they now loved, waiting for her who was beyond the trysting-hour. In a moment longer she was in his arms, and the stillness of the dead was invaded by the stifled sighs, the burning whispers, the rustling pressure of ardent, impatient lovers. The rising graves, and the mossy tomb-stones, and the white scattered bones that had escaped the sexton's eye, and glittered in the moonbeams, were equally neglected and overlooked; and no fear of fairy, ghost,

or gnome, or gowl, entered where Love left no room but for his own engrossing sacrifices. The simple monument of love of "Mary of the Le'," that rose by their side, had often brought the tears to Helen's eyes; but Mary of the Lee was now forgotten. "There is a time and a place for all things" but love, whose rule is general over the flowery lee and the green grave, the mid-day hour and the dreary key-stone of night's black arch.

"What kept ye, sweet Helen, love?" whispered Kirkpatrick in her ear, as she lay entranced in love's dream on his bosom.

"By that question, good Adam," answered she, according to the mode of familiar address of her day, "there hangs a secret that oppresses your Helen, and drinks up all the joys of our affection."

"Speak it forth, my gentle Helen," said Fleming. "What is it? The secrecy of our meeting? I have been meditating a resolution to address your father, and this will confirm me. He can have no objections to my suit, save that I am a friend of the Johnstones, and an open warrior; while your cousin, whom you rejected before you saw me, is a concealed mosstrooper, and a secret manslayer."

"There, there," muttered Helen, with trembling emotion—"there, Adam, you have hit the bleeding part of my heart. I did not say to you that I had rejected Blacket House before I saw you; but you were entitled to make that supposition, because I told you that I never received his love; but, alas! Adam, there is a distinction there; and, small as it may seem, its effects may be great upon the fortunes and happiness of your Helen. It is true I have never received his love; but it is equally true that his love, having overgrown the thought of a possibility of rejection, has overlooked my negative indications, and put down my silence for consent. Yes, Adam, yes—even now Blacket House thinks I love him; and, oh! the full responsibility of my apathy rises

before me like a threatening giant; my father and my mother have, I fear, taken for granted that I am to become the wedded wife of my cousin."

"Helen, this does indeed surprise me," replied Kirkpatrick, thoughtfully and sorrowfully. "I thought I had a sufficient objection to overcome on the part of your father, when I had to conquer the prejudices of clanship, and soothe his fears of my ardent spirit for the foray. But this changes all, and my difficulties are increased from the height of Kirkconnel Lee to the towering Criffel." And he sat silent for a time, and mused thoughtfully. "But why, my love," he continued, "have you allowed this dangerous delusion to rest so long undisturbed, till it has become a conviction that may only be removed with danger to us all?"

"Ask me not, Adam," replied she, with a full heart, "what I cannot explain. While the tongue of Blacket House's friendship was changing to love, I, whose thoughts were otherwise directed, perceived not the change; and when the truth appeared to me, my love for my father and mother, against the placid stream of whose life I have ever trembled to throw the smallest pebble of a daughter's disobedience, prevented me, day by day, from making the avowal that I could not love their choice. The difficulty increased with the hour; and, ah! my love for you crowned it at last with impossibility."

"That should rather have removed the difficulty," answered he. "Explain, sweet Helen. You are dealing in shadowy parables."

"Think you so, Adam?" said she, sighing. "Ah, then, is man's love different from woman's? The one can look an obstacle in the face; the other turns from it with terror, and flees. See you not that, by telling my parents I could not love my cousin, I would have been conjuring up a bad angel to cross, with his black wing, the secret but sweet path of our affection. The very possibility of being

separated from you—too dear, Adam, as you are to this beating heart—made me tremble at the articulation of that charmed word which contains all my happiness on earth. You have stolen my heart from my father and mother, my sweet woods and bowers, my bright moon and Kirtle; and think you what it would be for me to lose him in whom all is centred!”

“Ah! Helen, Helen, this is unlike the majesty of that mind that roved the blue fields of the heavens, and searched the hidden springs of the love that reigns through all created things. That such thoughts should be allied to that weakness which increases inevitable danger by flying from it, I could not have supposed to be exemplified by my Maid of Kirconnel. Yet is that trembling fear not a greater proof of my Helen’s love than an outspoken rejection of twenty rival suitors? It is—I feel it is; and who will chide a fault of earth that hangs by a virtue of heaven? Dear, devoted, cherished object of my first passion, what has the simple heir of Kirkpatrick to give in exchange for the devotion of such a being?”

And the impassioned youth pressed her closer and closer to his breast, while he spread over her shoulders the falling cloak, to shield her from the autumn dews.

They sat for some time silent—the difficulty of their situation being for a brief period forgotten and lost in the tumult of the rising feelings of a strong mutual passion.

“But this must not be allowed to continue,” again said Kirkpatrick. “It is *necessary*, Helen, that you do this duty to yourself, to your cousin, your parents, and to me. Call up the necessary fortitude, my love. Tell your mother that you cannot love Blacket House. I know the pain it will produce to you and to them; but, alas! there are many positions in this world where we can only get to the object of our desires through painful means. Pain is, indeed, the price of most of our pleasures; and, when we do not pay

that price, we become bankrupt in our best feelings, and die wretched. When the path is free, I shall come forward and claim my Helen in the face of the world. Will you, will you, love?"

And he bent his head, and repeated the question in soft tones beneath the cloak that covered her head; while she, in muffled accents, replied—

"I will, I will, Adam, though I should die with the last word of the declaration."

A heavy groan at this moment fell upon their ear. Adam started hastily up; and Helen, roused from her love's dream, stood petrified with fear. They looked around them in every direction; but the proximity of the place where they had been sitting to the edge of the wood, rendered it easy for an intruder to overhear their discourse, and to escape among the trees in an instant. Helen's fears again fell on Blacket House, and she whispered to Adam what she had observed previous to her leaving the house. He conceived them to be well founded; and, as the thought of the man who could kill his enemies in disguise, and deny the deed, flashed upon his mind, he felt for his sword, and then smiled at the precipitude of his defensive precaution. It was necessary, however, that Helen should now hurry home; and, surmounting the turf-dyke of the burying-ground, they, with rapid steps, made for Kirconnel House, at a little distance from which they parted, with a close embrace. Helen stood for a moment, and looked after her lover; then, wrapping her cloak about her head, she moved quickly round the edge of the enclosed lawn, and was on the eve of running forward to the wicket, when Blacket House stood before her. He looked for a moment sternly at her, spoke not a word, and then dashed away into the wood. Terrified still more, Helen hurried away, and got into the house and her own chamber before the full extent of her danger opened, with all its probable consequences, upon her mind. Hav-

ing undressed herself, she retired to her couch, and meditated on the extraordinary position in which she was now placed. She had now been discovered by her cousin, who, no doubt, knew well that she had that night had a secret meeting with Kirkpatrick—a partisan of his antagonists, the Johnstones. The discovery of a rival had come on him with the discovery of a delusion under which he had sighed, and dreamed, and hoped for years. It was probable, nay, certain, then, that the communication she intended to make to her father and mother, that she could not love Blacket House, would be received along with the elucidating commentary, that the lover now despised had discovered her love intercourse with the heir of Kirkpatrick. She would, therefore, get no credit for her statement that she never loved her cousin; but would be set down as a breaker of pledges, and one who traitorously amused herself with the broken hopes of her unfortunate lovers. Whether she made the communication or not, it would be made by Blacket House, whose fear of losing the object of his affections, or his revenge—whichever of the two moved him—would force him to the immediate disclosure. The serenity of the domestic peace and happiness of Kirconnel House would be clouded for the first time, and that by the disobedience of one who had heretofore been held to contribute, in no small degree, to that which she was to be the means of destroying, perhaps for ever. The contrast between the confidence, the hope, and the affection with which she had been, by her parents, contemplated, and fondly cherished, during all the bygone part of her life, and the new-discovered treachery into which her secret love for a stranger would be construed, was a thought she could scarcely bear. These and a thousand other things passed through her thoughts with a rapidity which did not lessen the burning pain of their impress upon her mind; and the repetition of a thousand reflections, fears, and hopes, produced in the end a

confusion that terrified sleep from her pillow, and consigned her to the powers of anguish for the remainder of the night and morning.

She rose with a burning cheek and a high-fluttering pulse, produced by the fever of mind under which she still laboured. She opened the casement to let in the cool breeze of morning to brace her nerves, and enable her to stand an interview with her father and mother, who might already (for Blacket House was at Kirconnel at all hours) be in possession of the secret of what they conceived to be their once-loved Helen's disobedience and treachery. Her own communication, which she had pledged herself to Kirkpatrick to make, was now invested with treble terrors; and though she knew that her safety and happiness depended upon an open declaration, she felt herself totally unable to make it. Trembling and irresolute, she approached the parlour where her father and mother, along with herself, were in the habit of taking their morning meal. They were there; and there was another there—it was her cousin. He looked at her as she entered, with a calm, but mysterious eye, which fluttered her nerves again, and forced her to stand for a moment in the middle of the apartment, irresolute whether to go forward or retreat. She fearfully threw her eye over the faces of her parents. There was no change there; the ordinary placidity of their wonted manner, and the kindly love-greeting borne in their mellow voices, startled her—so strong had been her conviction that all was disclosed. Her parents were destitute of guile; and an instant's thought satisfied her that they were still in their ignorance of the secret. But Blacket House continued his dark gaze, in silence; and even this—a decided alteration in his manner—was unnoticed by the unsuspecting couple, who threw their fond eyes on their loving daughter as their only remaining pride and solace. What meant this? The new turn taken by the stream of her difficulty and danger surprised

and confused her; but, calming by the influence of her parents' kindness, she sat down and went through the forms of the morning meal, without exhibiting a discomposure that might attract the notice of these loving beings, who searched her face only for the indications of health and the beams of her pleasure. Her comparative composure enabled her to collect her ideas; and she thought she now discovered a reason for this seeming forbearance or discretion of Blacket House—a man little formed for these, or any other virtues: he intended to *sell* his knowledge at the price of a hand that never could be his, but by this or some other means of compulsion. The moment this thought—and, under all the circumstances, it was a reasonable one—entered her mind, she trembled at the power of the dark-eyed, silent being who sat there, and gazed upon her in revengeful triumph. For relief, she turned her eyes to her parents; yet she saw there the smile that approved his suit, and the confidence that would believe his declaration. Her own Kirkpatrick was absent; and she dared not meet him to receive the assistance of his advice, to enable her to support herself under her trial, or devise a plan suited to the changed circumstances for her relief. She hurried over her meal, and hastened again to her apartment, to confirm herself in the opinion she had formed of Blacket House's intentions. Every thought tended to add to her conviction that she was correct, and told her that he never would succeed in his scheme. He would now, for certain, endeavour to see her alone, and lay before her the danger into which she had plunged herself, and the bargain by which she would be relieved from it. But she would defeat him; she would renounce her walks in the woods, desert, for a time, her bowers, and bid adieu to her silver Kirtle. She would keep her apartment under a pretence of slight indisposition—far from an untruth—and, in the meantime, try to devise some mode of relief from her painful situation.

But the solicitude of her parents interfered, in some degree, with these plans. They discovered that she was not so ill as to be unable to seek what might do her service—her former walks and amusements around Kirconnel Lee; and thus was she obliged to yield to kindness; yet she contrived to have her parents near her, so as to deprive Blacket House of an opportunity of communicating to her his imputed plan of enforcing his suit. As yet, his silence had been continued: her parents were still in ignorance; and it was only (so she argued) because he had not hitherto found her alone, that his dreaded communication had not as yet been made. On the occasion of her first walk, however, she, by some untoward chance, was left in one of the arbours alone, and the opportunity (the first that had occurred) was seized by him—Blacket House was again before her, and all her fears were in a moment roused. Their eyes met with an intelligence they had never before possessed. Every passing thought seemed to be mutually read, while a few words of ordinary import seemed to be only as a preparation to his expected statement. Helen did not dare to leave him; she feared to rouse his anger, and yet she wanted courage to reply with ordinary pertinence to his remarks. His eye was constantly fixed on her, and the few words he uttered came with difficulty and pain; yet was there not the slightest allusion to the secret he undoubtedly held locked up in his breast. Was he not to bring forward his threat of exposing her, as a wrenching instrument, to force from her a consent that he was satisfied would never be given voluntarily? There was no indication of any such issue. What could be the true meaning of this dark-minded man's conduct? Again he had disappointed her fearful anticipations. He had not told her parents; he was not to tell herself. What then was he to do? She could not answer her self-put question; and her surprise when he parted from her, after a short conversation, conducted with difficulty, with his secret unapproached, and

the mysterious stare of his illegible eye, was not less than her terror of the anticipated issue when she first encountered him.

This new extraordinary element in the subject of her meditations and fears disarranged all her ideas, and sent her thoughts in new channels for a discovery of what might be the secret plans of her cousin. She sighed for an interview with her lover; but that, she was satisfied, would be attended with great danger; and thus reduced to her own resources, she passed the night following her meeting with Blacket House in still increasing pain and difficulty. In the morning she was visited in her own chamber by her mother, who appeared, from the serious aspect of her countenance, to have something of great importance to communicate.

“Helen,” began the good matron, “though your father and I have seldom broached the subject of love and marriage in your presence, we have, with heartfelt satisfaction, observed and understood that the man who alone has our consent to win your virgin heart is your own choice. Your wooing has lasted so long, that the very birds in the woods are familiar with your persons and converse; and surely this is not to last always. You are twenty years old, my dear Helen, at the next Beltane, the first of May; and I know that it is Blacket House’s wish that your happiness may be crowned by a union within as short a period as we will agree to fix. I have broken the matter to you, my love; and as I am well acquainted with the fluttering of Love’s wings when Hymen enters the bower, I will not urge you to fix a day at present, but leave you to the pleasant meditations my communication cannot but call forth. I shall send your breakfast to your bedroom this morning, my love; but I hope we may walk in the afternoon. Say nothing, Helen. Adieu! adieu!”

And the mother left the room rapidly, as if to avoid noticing the blushes of the supposed happy damsel. Helen

heard the words uttered, as one may be supposed to feel the syllables of a condemnation falling upon the heart. It was well that her mother departed so rapidly, for the agitation the kind parent attributed to joy, was but the prelude to a faint, which retained her cold and struggling in its relentless arms for a considerable period. The first indications of consciousness were, if possible, more terrible than the last thoughts that frightened it away. For a long period she sat upon the couch where she had heard the dreadful intelligence, and, passing her hand over her brow, tried to collect her energies, so as to be able to contemplate the full extent of her evil. She thought she could now see some connection between the announcement made by her mother and the extraordinary and mysterious conduct of Blacket House, though she was satisfied that neither of her parents possessed any knowledge of her intercourse with Kirkpatrick. The scheme of the early marriage might originate in the fears of her cousin, while his secrecy was only still maintained till he found that she would not yield to her parents' authority; when would be the time for using his threat of disclosure to Helen, to compel her consent. All this reasoning seemed founded in existing circumstances and appearances; but so confused were her thoughts, and so painful every effort of her mind to acquire clearer views, that she felt inclined to renounce reasoning on a subject that seemed at every turn to defeat all her efforts to come to the real truth. Her misery was at least certain; for now, while the absolute necessity of a disclosure of her secret love became more peremptory and inevitable, the circumstances under which it would be made were such as would add to the unhappiness of her parents, and to the apparent deceit and treachery of her own nature, which was, notwithstanding, incapable of guile.

Meanwhile, the effects of so much mental anguish, acting upon a tender frame, became soon apparent in her pale

countenance and swollen eyes. She would not leave her apartment; and when her mother again visited her, she saw a change on her daughter very different from that which accompanies the character of a bride in prospective. The circumstance surprised the old lady; but still so satisfied was she that there could exist no objection to a lover whom she had (as was thought) cherished for years, that it never occurred to her that the change in her daughter was attributable to the announcement she had made to her; while Helen herself, oppressed with the secret which she struggled (as yet in vain) to divulge, shunned a subject which she found herself unable to treat in such a way as would insure to her relief from her sorrow. Every effort was made to get her out into the woods, where her former scenes might enliven her mind, and bring back her wonted spirits, which, chiming the musical bells of youth's happy glee, used to charm the age-stricken hearts of her parents. But these scenes had lost their power over her. The secrets Blacket House had to divulge still lay like an unholy spirit upon her heart, killed its energies, and rendered her miserable. She expected the additional sorrow of his society in these forced walks, and her grief was mixed with surprise at his absence. He was often at the house, but he avoided her. She even saw him turn into a by-path, to get out of the way in which she walked—a circumstance as inexplicable as any of the prior difficulties with which the whole affair was beset on every side. She continued her meditations, called up repeated energies to nerve her for her disclosure, and, with many a sigh, felt them die away, and the tongue cleave to her mouth, as the unavailing effort shook her frame.

She had been in the habit of meeting Kirkpatrick at regular intervals; but two of the stated periods had passed without an interview. The third was approaching; and she trembled at the necessity of throwing herself on his

bosom, and seeking counsel in her difficulty, appeared to her in such a form as to shake her resolution not to encounter another night-meeting with her cousin. On the morning of that evening when she must repair to the burying-ground, or lose the chance of meeting Kirkpatrick for a considerable time, it was announced to her parents, in her presence, at the table of the morning meal, that Blacket House had, on the previous day, gone on a visit to a relation in a very distant part of the country, and that he would not return for eight days. She heard it, and her eyes were involuntarily turned up to heaven, in thanksgiving for the opportunity she now enjoyed of sobbing out her sorrows on the bosom of her Kirkpatrick, and getting good counsel in her distress. She said nothing when the announcement was made, and heard, without heeding, the remarks of her parents. Her thoughts were in Death's Mailing, and the pallid hue of her cheek gave place for a moment to the flush that followed the fancied touch of his lips, and the pressure that brought her nearer to the bosom where lay all the relief she now had in this world. She sought more freely than she had done for some time her old retreats, and again the song of the merle had some music for her ear—so ready is the oppressed soul to seek its accustomed pleasures, that it will clutch them in the interval of a suspended grief, though sure to return. Her cousin was gone for a time; he could not cross in these paths of the wood; and, oh happy thought! she would lie on the bosom of her Kirkpatrick, and breathe forth, uninterrupted, love's sweet tale, rendered sweeter and dearer by the grief with which it was shaded.

The evening fell that night beautiful and serene. No vapour clouded the "silver sheen," and no breath of wind rustled a leaf on the trees.

"Hail to ye, bright queen!" ejaculated Helen, as she folded her mantle round her, and was on the eve of seeking the wood; "once more light me to my lover, if, after this

meeting, you should for ever hide your face among the curtains of heaven."

And, breathing quick with the rising expectation of being enclosed in his arms, she issued from the house, and sought the well-known loaning that led to the burying-ground. Her grief had sunk for a time amidst the swelling impulses of her passion; and it was not till she had been pressed to his bosom, her brow kissed by his burning lips, and deep-drawn sighs exhausted the ardour of a first embrace after so long a separation, that one single thought of the cruelty of her situation arose in her mind. They sat on the tumulus where they had sat often before. The gravestones around them lay serene in a flood of moonlight; the soft "bulla" of the wimpling Kirtle was all that disturbed the silence of the night; calmly there reposed the dead of many generations; if their lives were ended, their griefs, too, were past; and Mary of the Le', whose grey monument reflected clearly the moon's light, was free from the anguish which, in struggling sighs, came from the bosom of her who was *yet* above the green mound. Helen told her lover all the extraordinary circumstances of her situation. She wept at every turn of a new difficulty, and Adam's eyes were also suffused with tears; he pressed her again to his breast, and bade her be of better heart, for that better days were coming on the wings of time.

"I confess," he said, "my dear love, that I am unable to understand the conduct of that dark-minded man; but what can he do, if my Helen should yet redeem her error, and make this necessary disclosure? That is alone the cure of our pain. Oh, Helen! what a load of evil might have been averted from our heads by the exercise of a little self-command!"

"I see it, I feel it," replied she; "but there are powers higher than the resolves of mortals. I have struggled with myself till the blood was sent back in my veins, and fright-

ened nature saved the powerless victim of grief by the mantle of unconsciousness. What, Adam, shall I do? I feel I am unequal to the task of speaking a daughter's rebellion and a traitor's resolution."

"When everything is explained, Helen," replied the other, "the treachery disappears, and a father and mother's love will not die under the passing cloud of a little anger. Think of our bliss, love! Did hope never bring courage to your tongue, Helen? Ah, what would that bright goddess make Adam Fleming dare!"

"And what," said she, "would Helen Bell not dare for the love she bears to her Adam, if that sacred feeling of a daughter's duty were overcome? But it must be. I shall fall upon my mother's neck, and weep out with burning tears of repentance a daughter's contrition. I will appeal to the heart of a mother and a woman. I will conjure up her own first love, move again the spring of her earliest affection, and feign to her my father lost, and her heart wrecked. Ay, Adam, hope—the hope of the possession of you—will accomplish all this. Helen has said it, and the issue will prove."

This burst of generous resolution produced a flood of tears. She crept closer to him, and the throbs of her heart were heard in the silence which reigned among the graves. A rustling sound among the trees roused her; she lifted her head, and fixed her eyes on a part of the wood on the other side of the Kirtle. For a moment she watched some movements not noticed by her lover. They rose, and Adam stood aside to get a better view of the interruption. In an instant she clung to his bosom; a loud shot reverberated through the wood; Helen fell dead—the ball destined for Kirkpatrick having been received by the devoted maiden, who saw the hand uplifted that was to do the deed of blood. Neither scream nor audible sigh came from her; one spring when the ball entered the heart—and death!

Kirkpatrick saw at once death and the cause of it, and in an instant he gave pursuit. Springing with a bound over the Kirtle, he seized Blacket House in the act of flight. The murderer turned, sword in hand, and a battle was fought in the wood, such as never was witnessed in the heat of the contest of armies. Had his opponent had twenty lives, the fury of Kirkpatrick would have been unsatiated by them all. His spirit was roused to that of a demon; a supernatural strength nerved his arm; he despised life and all its blessings; the world had in an instant lost for him any charms, but as the place where lived that one man whose blood was to glut his vengeance. His sword found the heart of Blacket House, and twenty wounds verified the ballad:—

“I lighted down my sword to draw—
I hacked him in pieces sma’—
I hacked him in pieces sma’,
For her sake that died for me.”

He returned to the burying-ground. His Helen’s body was as cold as that of those who lay beneath.

“O Helen fair beyond compare,
I’ll mak a garland of thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair
Until the day I dee.”

Such is the story of Helen Bell, a subject that has employed the pen of many a poet, and brought tears to the eyes of millions. We sometimes, according to our privilege, amuse our readers with pure unadulterated fiction. Would that our task had been such on this occasion!—for we prefer the sorrow which fancy, imitating truth, rouses in the heart, to the depressing power of “owre true a tale.” We may add, that the Maid of Kirconnel is more frequently called Helen Irving than Helen Bell, in consequence of some doubt as to whether her mother was not really one of the Bells, and her father an Irving. After giving the matter all due

consideration, and searching several authorities, we are satisfied that the truth is as we have related it. Our very ingenious friend, Professor Gillespie, in a section of "Gleanings of the Covenant," says that the beautiful ballad, some of the lines of which we have quoted, was written on "Helen Palmer." We must have his authority.

T O M D U N C A N ' S Y A R N .

WILLIAM DUNCAN had lived nearly thirty years in the service of a landed proprietor in Dumfries-shire; where his honest, upright, trustworthy character had gained him the esteem and respect of his employer; and he was looked upon more in the light of a humble friend, than of a hired menial. Nearly five-and-twenty years had elapsed since his marriage to Janet, who had long before been his "neebor" servant. Their family consisted of two children, a son and daughter; the latter of whom had been, at the time our story commences, for some time married to a farm-servant, and was living in a cottage closely adjoining her father's. The son had been sent, when about seventeen years of age, with cattle to Annan, and had there made acquaintance with some seafaring men, whose stories of the wonders of other lands had excited his curiosity, and awakened an irrepressible longing to witness the strange sights he had heard of. It was in vain that his father and mother strove to divert his thoughts into another channel—"he *would* be a sailor;" and they at last wisely consented to what they could not prevent. About two years after his departure, Willie's good old master died; having left his faithful servant a small annuity, sufficient to make his old age comfortable—for he was now almost superannuated. The old gentleman had died childless, leaving his estate to a distant relative; and his successor, knowing the estimation in which Willie had been held by his late master, allowed him to live rent-free in one of the cottages on the estate, and treated him, on all occasions, with great consideration and kindness. There was but one thing wanting to make

the old couple happy: their simple appetites were easily satisfied; they had enough and to spare, without the toil of labour; but their son, their only son, was a wanderer, and years had passed since they had received any intelligence of him, and then they had only been informed that he had gone to some foreign station. "Oh, could we but see him ance mair afore we dee!" was often their exclamation.

One stormy night in October, the old couple were startled by a loud rap at the door.

"Preserve us!" said Janet, in great alarm, "what's that? Wha can that be chappin at the door on sic a nicht as this? Maybe it's some puir seekin body, wantin shelter frae the blast. Up, Willie, man, an' ask wha it is."

"It's me, faither—it's Betty," replied the voice of the daughter, in answer to her father's queries; "let me in."

"What's brocht ye oot, woman," said Willie, "in sic a clash o' rain as this?"

"There's a puir sailor lad come to oor hoose," replied she, "an' he wants something to eat an' drink, an' we haena a bite o' cake left: hae ye ony to spare? An', what think ye, faither? he kens oor Tam weel, an' says he saw him no that lang syne."

"Kens oor Tam!" said the old man; "what for did ye no bring him wi' ye? Gie's doon my plaid; I'll gang an' speak to him mysel."

"Na, na, faither; ye maunna cross the door while it's pourin this gate. I'll fetch him when he's had his supper. I'd hae brocht him afore, but I thocht maybe he micht be makin ye believe oor Tam was comin hame, or some sic clavers, an' ye wad be wearyin to see him, an' maybe no see him after a'."

"An' what for micht he no be comin hame?" said Willie. "It's time he war, I think, if he wishes to find the auld folk to the fore."

"Well, but, faither, suppose he war to tell ye that he

had seen oor Tam twa or three days syne, an' that ye micht expeck to see him hame sune?"

"Mercy, lass! what's the matter wi' ye, wi' yer maybes an' yer supposes? What gars ye gang swaggerin up an' doon that gait, lookin as ye were demented? There's something pleasin ye by common. If 'twar Tam himsel, ye couldna be mair uplifted."

"An' guid richt hae I to be uplifted, mither, if ye kent a'."

"Eh, it's Tam himsel!" almost screamed the old woman; "where is he? Let me see my bairn."

"Here's all that's left of him, mother," said a fine, stout-looking sailor; who, unable any longer to restrain his impatience, stumped in on a wooden leg just as Janet was speaking.

"My bairn! my bairn!" sobbed the old woman, throwing her arms round him; "mony a lang day hae I prayed to see ye ance mair; an' noo that I hae ye, oh, do I see ye a puir cripple!"

"Oh, that's nothing, mother; nothing but the fortune of war. If I'd lost my head instead of my leg, mother, I wouldn't have been here to tell my own story."

"That's Gude's truth; an' great reason hae we to be thankfu it's nae waur. But, oh! it's a sair dispensation."

"Ah, old boy! how are you?" said Tom, shaking his father heartily by the hand; "all alive and hearty—eh?"

"Weel aneugh, weel aneugh, Tam; just choppin on; but richt glad am I to see ye again, my son. But, Tam, that wasna the gate ye wad hae spoken to yer auld faither afore ye gaed frae hame."

"My manner of speaking may be changed, father," replied the young man, respectfully; "but there's no change in my heart—that's true-blue still; and it'll be long before I can clear off my reckoning with you for all your kindness to me. No, no, father, my *heart's* in the right place still."

"Weel, my man, I hope sae. Sit doon an' tell us a' that's happened ye sin' we last heard frae ye. But wait a wee. Janet, seek oot the best that's in the hoose for the puir fallow; an', whan he's had a guid supper, he'll be in better fettle for giein us his cracks."

"Tak aff yer jacket, my bonny man," said his mother; "an' hing it up afore the fire, an' draw in till't yersel. Willie, I'm thinkin there's something in the bottle. I'll put on the kettle, an' we'll gie the lad something he'll be nane the waur o'."

After the sailor had done his devoirs at the supper-table, the whole party drew round the fire, and the old man, lighting his "cutty," said—

"Noo, Tam, tell us a' aboot what ye've been doin, an' hoo ye cam to lose yer leg."

"It's a terrible long yarn, father, and I'm afeared ye'll be glad to sing out Avast! before I've spun it out; besides, you'll not understand my sea lingo."

"Nae fear o' that," replied he; "ye ken I was ance a bit o' a sailor mysel. We could see the Solway frae the hoose I hired at when I was a callan."

"But, eh, Tam, my man," said old Janet, "ye talk English as weel's the grand folk doon by."

"Ay, ay, mother; leave me alone for that. My mess-mates used to say as how I ought to have been a Methodist preacher, seein I knowed so well how to tip them the dictionary."

"Hear till him!" said the delighted mother, holding up her hands in admiration.

"But, howsomdever, they haven't made me proud on't, you see, with all their blarney. But I must carry on, or my yarn 'll reach from this to the end of next week. It's now six years since I got a berth on board one o' them Newcastle colliers, and a jolly time we had on't; for, though we'd lashin' to do, and no want of wet jackets, there was

always a full bread-bag, and swipes and grub at no allowance. They're the craft to teach a man his duty! Well, I'd been in that trade about a year, when I goes ashore one day with the mate at Wapping; and, while we were sitting comfortably swigging our grog, the landlord comes rushing in, and, says he, 'My lads, you must brush; there's the pressgang a-coming.' Hearing that, the mate and I bolted out of the door, and ran for it; but they twigged us, and gave chase. They nabbed the mate in less nor no time; but I cracked on a press o' sail, and was dropping them astern fast, when, as I was looking back at them over my shoulder, I ran stem on to an old fishwife. My eyes, what a crash! I sends her and her sprats a-swimming in the gutter, and I falls as flat as a flounder on the pavement, spouting out blood from my nose, like a whale. Well, to cut a long yarn short, we were taken on board the tender, and afterwards drafted into the Fire-eater frigate, which was stationed on the north coast of Ireland. I was very well off on board the frigate. 'Sharp' was the word, to be sure, and the cat often wagged her tail; but then, as long as a man was smart and willing, he'd never no 'casion to be afeared: there was never no favour nor affection there. Well, as I said afore, we were cruising off the coast of Ireland, when, one day, it came on to blow great guns from the westward. For three blessed days, there was the little Fire-eater tossing and tumbling, and kicking up her starn, and going through as many manoeuvres as a dancing-master, till at last we were driven so far west that we made the coast of Argyle; then 'bout ship we went, and stood away again to the eastward. Well, we carried on for a matter of four-and-twenty hours, with a little more northing in the wind, when we made land again, and hauled up two or three points to clear it. The weather was so thick ye might a'most have cut it with a knife, and there wasn't such a thing as a dirty face on board, the sea made a clean wash of everything, and it blowed—

my eyes, how it did blow! Mayhap, you call this a gale, but you wouldn't have heard it beside that. It was bad enough to be on deck, but ten times worse below; a devil of a sea smashed in some of the ports, and the leeseide of the main-deck was three feet deep in water. And then, while we were hard at work, stuffing up the holes where the water was pouring in, and pumping, there was an awful stramash on deck; for there was the land again, close aboard of us ahead. 'Wear ship!' was now the cry, and away went the little hooker again on the other tack, and bravely did she behave—a better sea-boat never swam; for, battered and knocked about as she was, she showed true pluck; no sooner was she knocked over by a sea, than she rose again like a duck, though she was forced to shake her feathers now and then. Well, at eight-bells in the first watch (midnight), we thought it was all up with us again, for there was the surf breaking on the rocks little more than half-a-mile on the lee-bow—and touch-and-go it was; but our tight little barky—though she was anything but tight by that time—though she lay over till she was half buried alive, looked boldly up in the wind, and shot past like a sea-bird. If there hadn't been such a devil of a noise, you might have heard a pin drop just then. There was not a man on deck who did not hold his breath, and gasp, when the danger was past, like one that's just escaped drowning.

“‘By the powers!’ says I to Bill Jones, ‘that was a close shave.’

“‘You may say that,’ says he.

“Just as he was a-speaking, the moon shone out, and there, not six hundred yards to leeward, were breakers again. The sea was running as high as our tops at the time; but beyond and above it we saw the breakers curling their white tops, foaming, and dashing, and roaring, as if they were raging to get at us, as you may have seen wild

beasts tearing and leaping, and striving to break their chain to get out of the menagerie at their prey. Now, indeed, it seemed there was no chance of escape—there was no room to wear, and the ship was already half-buried under her canvas; our only hope seemed to be in our ground tackle, and orders were given to clear away the anchors, and to have all ready for cutting away the masts. That was an awful moment; we thought it was all up with us, and there was many a pale cheek, and many a muttered prayer for mercy and deliverance; for the worst amongst us are glad to look aloft when death is staring us in the face below. Our captain was as brave a fellow, and as good a seaman, as ever stepped a plank. What his feelings may have been, it's impossible for the likes o' me to say; but I never seed him more cool in a calm than at that moment, when the bravest might have flinched, and no man could have cast it in his teeth. His voice never shook when he gave his orders, loud, clear, and distinct; and his gallant bearing cheered the down-hearted, and gave fresh pluck to the daring. He was a trump, that fellow! He ordered the foretopsail and foresail to be set. It seemed to be a rash and dangerous experiment, but it succeeded. Nothing venture, nothing win; we might have lost our masts, but we saved the ship. The little frigate lay over for a minute, as if she was never going to rise no more; all hands thought the masts must go, for everything aloft grinned again, and the rigging was as taut as bars of iron; but it held on, and the frigate righted again, and sprung ahead, as you have seen a hare make a fresh stretch from the hounds—and we were all saved. We shaved the reef so close, that I'm blessed if I couldn't a'most have chucked a biscuit on shore."

"Mercy!" said the old woman; "what an escape!"

"Ay, mother, we sailors have many a narrow squeak for it, that you long-shore folks never dream of; but you know,

as the song says, 'There's a sweet little cherub sits perched up aloft, to take care of the life of poor Jack;' and we're as safe, for the matter o' that, on the stormy sea, as you are on the terry firmy, as our doctor used to call the land."

"Weel, but what was the upshot o' the business?" said Willie.

"Why, ye see, though we had escaped so mirac'lously like, we were still too near a lee-shore to be quite comfortable; for we'd another headland tō weather afore we could say we was clear o' danger. There was never an eye closed on board that night, and a long and weary night it was. Blessed if ever I seed a craft stand up under her canvas as our little barky did, carrying on at the rate of seven knots an hour, while the sea made a fair breach over her every now and then, and made her stagger from stem to starn. At last, 'old roarer,' as I've heard our doctor call the daybreak, made its appearance, and we saw the land we was afeared o', some distance astarn. After that, the gale began to moderate, and a fair wind soon took us under our anchorage."

Here old Janet interrupted her son, with, "Weel, but Tam, ye haena tauld us yet hoo ye cam to lose yer leg."

"Never hurry no man's cattle, mother," replied the sailor; "leave me to spin my own yarn my own way, and I'll come to the end on't at last; I told you you'd cry out Avast! afore I'd done."

"Hoot, Janet," said Willie, "let the lad tak his ain gate. It just astonishes me to hear him rinnin the words oot sae glib, an' him sic a solid callant as he used to be."

"Weel, weel, gang on, my man; I'll no meddle wi' ye ony mair."

"Then here goes! Carry on again, says I," replied Tom. "The frigate I belonged to afterwards went on the Jamaica station, and cruised about, to protect the merchantmen from the pirates as infested them seas. Well, we

were dodging about one night, under topgallantsails, off Cape St Antonio, with just wind enough to make the bark crawl through the water. It was my look-out on deck, and I sees something like a large bird, as it seemed to me, hovering about in a patch of clear sky; so I stared at it, and stared at it, but I couldn't make out what it could be, for it kept moving backwards and forwards, but always in the same part of the sky. So I calls the midshipman of the watch, and says to him—

“ ‘D'ye see that large bird a-flying about there, sir? It's the biggest I ever seed, and it keeps always about the same place; I can't make out what it can be after.' Well, he looks and wonders like myself, and then he goes to fetch the night-glass; and, after he'd squinted through it for a minute or two, he just mutters to himself, 'The devil!' and away he runs aft to the luftenant of the watch, and brings him a-running back with him.

“ ‘Whereabouts?' said the luftenant.

“ ‘There, sir; just under that cloud that's hiding the moon.'

“ ‘Ay, so it is!' said he; 'I see her spars plain enough; nothing but a royal loose—and there's her hull!' he continued, as the moon broke out, and showed us a long, low, rakish-looking square brig, lying as snug as a duck in the water, about two miles on our lee-bow. 'I don't like the look of her at all,' says the luff, and away he goes to make his report. She seemed to have twigged us at the same time, and didn't like the look of us neither; for, almost before the smoke had cleared away from our bows, after we had spoken to her with one of the forecastle guns, we could hear the pipe on board of her, the night was so still; and, in a crack, she was one cloud of canvas, from the truck to the lower boom. Blowed if ever I seed a man-of-war do the thing smarter. 'All hands make sail in chase!' was the cry on board of us, and, in a very short time, the water

was talking Spanish under our bows. Every stitch of sail was packed on the ship: but the stranger stood right away before the light breeze, and crawled away from us fast, for that was our worst sailing point. We kept a-blazing away with our bow guns, to bring her to; but the more we fired, the more she wouldn't stop; and we might just as well have fired at the moon, for all the mischief we could do her. At daylight, she was hull down ahead; but the breeze freshened with the rising sun, and we began to fetch up our sternway, and, before noon, we began to drop our shot into her. She wasn't slow in answering at first from her stern guns, which were uncommon well sarved, and every now and then walked a ball through our sails, but luckily did not strike our masts. We were overhauling her in great style, peppering away as fast as we could, when all at once she began to yaw about, and, giving a broad sheer away to port, she shortened sail, and then came to the wind again on the starboard tack, with her maintopsail to the mast, and doused a red rag she had a-flying at the main. We gave over firing, and soon bowled up alongside of her, rolled up the small sail, hauled up the foresail, and backed the main-yard. Our captain hailed her in a devil of a rage, and was answered in some lingo I couldn't understand; but the fellow pointed to his boat, as had a plank knocked out of her side; and orders were given to man our boats, and send them on board, to take possession of her. Well, just as we were a-lowering the boats, and all hands pleased at the thoughts of a good prize, blowed if she didn't quietly steal her fore-yard forward a little, to gather way, and before you could say Jack Robinson, she was braced sharp up, with all her small kites set, and, as she stood across our bows, she pitched it into us in style. It was a blind look-out, sartinly, to let the sneaking scoundrel slip through our fingers that way; but there was no help for it now. The boats were secured

again; and in a few minutes we were after her. As long as the breeze held strong and steady, we had rather the best on't; but it soon began to die away, and then we thought we would lose her for sartin, when a lucky shot crippled her gaff, which soon snapped like a carrot. Now that so much after-sail was off her, she couldn't keep her wind, and we neared her fast. 'Don't spare her, my lads!' shouted the captain; and we *did* pour the grape and canister into her in fine style, till she was a regular wreck; but she showed pluck to the last, and kept blazing away at us as long as she was able. At last she got tired, and gave over firing, and struck her colours. The boats were well manned and armed, and were again sent to take possession of her; the frigate running almost alongside, and threatening to blow her out of the water, if she attempted any further resistance. When we were coming up under her quarter in the boats, we heard the sound of loud quarrelling on board, and when we got fairly on the quarterdeck, we found the captain of the pirate swearing like a trooper, and saying as how his crew had betrayed him, like cowardly dogs, as they were. He kept stamping up and down the deck like mad, looking as if he could eat the luftenant, when he took his sword from him. Ten or twelve desperate-looking rough'uns as ever I seed gathered round him, muttering that it was better to die on the quarterdeck like men, than hang like dogs at the yardarm, and all at once they snatched up some tommyhawks as was lying on the deck, and made a desperate rush upon us. We had an awful tussle for it; and, just as we were in the thick on't, hand to hand, up runs a young man from below, and sings out to us, 'Save me—save me!' As soon as the pirate captain seed him, he ran at him like a tiger, and, seizing him by the throat, shouted out, 'Dead men tell no tales!' and raised his tommyhawk to cleave him to the skull. Poor lad! he thought his signal for sailing was made, that it was all up

with him. He muttered, 'Mercy! mercy!' But poor mercy would he have met with, if I hadn't run up just in time, and fetched the fellow a slash with my cutlass, which made him drop the tommyhawk like a hot potato. He left the lad, and turned round upon me, gnashing his teeth like nothing at all with very rage, and, before I had time to wink my eye, he snatches a loaded pistol out of my belt, and smashes my leg to shivers. Down I dropped; but before he could finish what he had begun so cleverly, a pistol flashed close to his head, and he staggered, and fell, never to rise no more. When I came to my senses again, I found myself in the sick-bay, on board my own ship. The surgeon was forced to cut off my leg to save my life; and when we arrived at Port Royal, I was sent ashore to the hospital, and afterwards got my discharge."

"An' what o' the—what d'ye ca' them—rats?" said old Janet.

"Oh, they were taken into Port Royal, and tried for piracy; there was lots of evidence against them, the blood-thirsty rascals, and they were all hanged, except three or four. And so there's an end of my yarn, father; and a precious long one, I daresay, you think it is; and here am I come home a poor useless cripple, to moor myself for life, if so be you'll let me come to an anchor under your lee."

"Ay, my boy," replied the old man, clapping him kindly on the shoulder, "as long's there's a plack to the fore in the purse, or a gowpenfu' o' meal in the kist, ye'se aye be welcome to a share."

"True-blue for ever!" shouted Tom; "but, father, it's not come to that yet; I'm not going to anchor without paying the harbour dues. Here," continued he, tossing a well-filled purse to the old man; "I haven't been so long afloat for nothing; there's a good whack of prize-money there, and I'll come in for a pension by and by, if I've luck."

"Keep it yersel, Tam," replied Willie; "I'm no gaun to touch a bawbee o't. Gude be thankit! I hae aneugh an' to spare."

Finding his father firm in his refusal, Tom at last said—

"Well, well, keep it for me, if you won't keep it for yourself. It won't keep company with me long; for, somehow, whenever I cast off the standing part of a guinea, it devilish soon unreeves itself in quarter less no time. Stow it away in your own lockers, and serve it out to me now and then, when I wants baccy."

As this seemed a very rational kind of arrangement, the old man consented to become his son's banker.

"And now that I've run all my line off the reel, father, you must give me a spell, and let's hear all that's been put down in your log since I left you."

"Oh, it's no muckle I hae to tell, Tam," replied he; "ae day has been as like the ane that gaed afore't, as ae pear to anither; I was born here, and here I'll maist likely dee."

"But what's become o' bonny Jean Cameron, father? I remember well how fond I was of her, when I was a boy at school; I've oft thought on her, when we've been keeping up Saturday night, at sea. Many's the *tot* I've emptied to her health."

"She's still to the fore, Tam, and 'maist as bonny as ever; she was married four years syne, but she's a widow noo." He then went on to tell his son the other changes that had taken place since his departure, the principal of which was the death of his late master and kind friend, Murray of Greenha'. "He was a guid freend to me," said Willie, drawing the back of his hand over his eyes; "but he's gane noo. I've nae cause to compleen o' my present maister, for a kinder couldna be; but he'll never be to me like him that's gane."

James Hamilton, old Willie Duncan's present master, had made a large fortune in the West India trade, and was

proprietor of a valuable estate in Jamaica. For a series of years, so rapidly had he amassed wealth, that he seemed to be a peculiar favourite of Fortune; but Fortune has ever been a capricious dame, and those who are apparently highest in her good graces, are often made to feel how uncertain is the tenure by which they hold them. She seems, like some of the savages of the western world, to pamper her victims with the good things of this life, only to make them feel more keenly the reverses she is preparing for them. James Hamilton was one of those men, unfortunately too rare, who do not allow themselves to be dazzled by the flattering appearances of present prosperity, but who, aware of the changeable and fleeting nature of all earthly possessions, hold on the even tenor of their course, with minds prepared for every vicissitude. He always acted upon high and pure principle, and never, in the height of prosperity, forgot that the same Supreme Benefactor, who in his bounty had blessed him with abundance, might, in his wisdom, think fit to try him with adversity. He was a kind-hearted and liberal man, but withal cool, quiet, and methodical in his manners and actions. Heedless of the opinion of the world, he acted up to the dictates of his own conscientious feelings of right and wrong; and his strict notions of evenhanded justice often led him to enter into engagements, and to perform actions, which, though perfectly just and rigidly honest, bore, in the eyes of a misjudging world, the impress of calculating selfishness and niggardly illiberality. But, notwithstanding, there was such straightforward honesty, such child-like, confiding simplicity, and such pure and unpretending Christianity, evident in his character, that it was impossible for those who knew him well not to esteem and love him. His principal failing was one which "leaned to virtue's side." Upright, and honourable, and candid, he thought all others like himself, and was often the dupe of designing and crafty men; who, with more worldly wisdom,

were far his inferiors in judgment, and sound, practical sense; but who practised upon his confiding nature by the semblance of qualities which they did not possess. He had long been blessed with the companionship of an amiable and excellent wife; and, when she was snatched from him by a sudden and virulent disorder, he could ill have borne his bereavement, had he not been supported by the conviction that she was only removed to a purer and happier state of existence; and he bowed with submission to the decrees of that Being who "doeth all things wisely." His only son, John, who had been an object of most tender solicitude to both his parents, had been educated with the greatest care; and, though apparently born the heir to great wealth, had undergone a regular probation in a mercantile house in the city, of which he hoped soon to become a partner. Many of the elder Hamilton's friends had expressed their surprise at his choice of a profession for his son, and wondered that, rolling in wealth, as he was supposed to be, he should condemn his heir to the drudgery of a counting-house: but events proved that he had acted wisely and well. The sudden and totally unexpected failure of a large West India house with which he was connected, and to support which he had advanced considerable sums, gave the first shock to his credit; and, as is often the case, reverse followed reverse afterwards, until utter ruin seemed to be inevitable. Undazzled by prosperity, Hamilton proved himself to be equally unshaken by adversity. His character as a mercantile man stood so high for unimpeachable integrity and indefatigable industry, that he might have made head for some years longer against the stream of adverse circumstances, and might, perhaps, eventually have overcome them; but the plain path of duty was the one he had followed through life, and he did not desert it now. He immediately wound up his affairs, and, having settled with his creditors to the uttermost farthing, he found himself almost destitute.

with the exception of his personal property, and the West India estate; which, however, had for some years barely paid its own expenses. It was now that Hamilton had reason to rejoice that his beloved son had, by his wise foresight, been rendered independent of circumstances, and had been bred up in habits which would enable him soon to acquire a comfortable establishment for himself. He immediately sold his house and furniture, and retired to a humble lodging in the city, where, with patient and laudable energy, he exerted himself to recover the ground he had lost. Sudden and unexpected as his reverses had been, he never murmured at the hardship of his lot, convinced that all the dispensations of Providence are wisely and mercifully ordered, and happy in the consciousness that he had nothing to reproach himself with, as far as concerned his dealing with his fellow-men. About this time, his son John was sent out to Jamaica, on some mercantile speculation, by the house with which he was connected, and obtained permission to remain some time on the island, to inquire into the management of his father's plantation; and, if necessary and possible, to effect its sale. He was about twenty-four years of age; tall, and handsome in his appearance, and a youth of excellent dispositions and steady principles. By his persevering and conscientious attention to his duties, he had gained the confidence and esteem of his employers, and had acquired the character of an active and clever man of business. He had long been a secret admirer of Ellen Winterton, the orphan child of an officer in the army, and who was living under the guardianship of the head of his firm. Accustomed, however, always to keep his feelings under control, and to regulate his desires by the rules of honour and of prudence, young Hamilton did not think himself justified in making his proposals in form, until fortune should have enabled him to do so as an independent man. The change in his father's circumstances,

while it called for fresh exertions on his part, seemed to separate him still more widely from the object of his wishes; but he bore his prolonged probation with cheerfulness, and his grief at parting with Ellen was almost neutralised by the animating prospect of serving his beloved father. After an absence of some months, during which he had written home several times, a letter was received from him, announcing his having left Kingston harbour, in the fast-sailing, well-armed merchant-ship, the *Delight*, and expressing his hope soon to join his father again. Fortune, in the meanwhile, had smiled again upon the elder Hamilton, in a way he little expected. He was surprised one evening by the receipt of a note from a gentleman, whose signature was unknown to him, and who requested a personal interview with him next morning, at a neighbouring coffee-house. Thither he repaired accordingly, wondering what could be the nature of the communication the stranger wished to make to him.

"Mr Hamilton, I believe?" said a gentleman, dressed in deep mourning, to whom the waiter pointed him out, as he entered the room. "I know you well by name and character, Mr Hamilton, though I have not the happiness of your personal acquaintance, and I am happy to be the bearer of pleasing intelligence to you. I am one of the executors of Mr Murray of Greenha', who died childless, and, in consequence of the demise of his near relations, has made you his heir; and I have to congratulate you upon your accession to a valuable landed property and a handsome fortune."

Mr Hamilton was not a little surprised at this announcement. Murray of Greenha' was a distant relation of his late father; but the families had had no communication for several years, and he had almost forgotten that such a person was in existence. This unexpected revolution, by which he was again restored from poverty to wealth and comfort, excited his warmest feelings of gratitude and thankfulness towards that Being in whom he had always trusted with

unwavering confidence. He immediately set off to the north, to visit his newly-acquired property, and to carry into effect the provisions of his benefactor's will. Among other duties devolved upon him, was that of providing for our friend Willie Duncan, whose upright, manly character, and grateful attachment to his late master, gave him strong claims upon the good-will and respect of his successor. He had been some time in the north when he heard of his son's having left Jamaica; but months instead of weeks had elapsed, and still no further accounts had been received of him, and he began to be seriously alarmed on his account. His agent in town, in reply to his anxious inquiries, informed him that the *Delight* was known to have left Kingston harbour at the time specified, but that she had not since been heard of; and, as she was so very much beyond her expected time, and several ships had arrived in England, which had only just reached the harbour when she left it, there was now little doubt of her loss. This was sad news to the elder Hamilton, and it required the exercise of all his Christian fortitude to enable him to bear up under the heavy dispensation. He had gained unexpected wealth; but he for whom he prized it had been snatched from him. One afternoon, shortly after the return of the sailor, Tom Duncan, Mr Hamilton was sauntering, in a melancholy mood, along the high road near Greenha', and was scarcely aroused from his abstraction by the rattling of a post-chariot, which was almost upon him before he was aware of its approach.—“Stop!—stop!” said a voice from the inside. The door was dashed open, and in a moment the bewildered father was in the arms of his long-lost son. It was some time before either of them could speak. At last, the father sobbed out—

“My dear, dear son! I thought you were torn from me for ever! Heaven be praised for all its mercies! I shall now die happy. But how have I been so cruelly deceived?

They told me you were lost, and my heart was almost broken. But come, come away to the house, and, after you have refreshed yourself, you can gratify my curiosity." On entering the house, John congratulated his father most affectionately on the change that had taken place in his affairs. "I am glad of it on your account, John; for myself, I care not. I was as happy with my crust and cheese, and with my consciousness that I was doing my duty, as I am now—rich beyond my fondest hopes. Yes, John, I thank Heaven, for myself, that I am blessed with a contented spirit; and, for *you*, that, when I die, you will be amply provided for." As soon as John had done ample justice to the substantial lunch placed before him, his father said to him, "If you are not much fatigued, we will take a stroll, and, while I am showing you the lions, you can be telling me your adventures."

"With all my heart," replied he.

"When we left Kingston harbour in the *Delight*, we were all in high glee, in the anticipation of a speedy and pleasant voyage. Our ship was one of the fastest of her class, well armed, and manned with an active and spirited crew; so that, to all human appearance, we had little to dread, either from man or the elements. We had scarcely lost sight of the land, when the wind died away to a dead calm, and the sea became as smooth and clear as a mirror, glancing back the reflection of a bright and cloudless moon. The sails flapped heavily against the masts, as the ship rolled helpless and unmanageable in the long swell, and the water dripped from her channels, as she rose again, after dipping them deep into the sea. All at once a small, dark cloud appeared on the larboard beam.

"‘Oh, it's nothing,’ said the mate.

"Not so thought the captain, who fortunately came upon deck at the time.

"‘All hands shorten sail!’ shouted he. ‘Bear a hand!

Up foresail !—in royals and topgallantsails ! Brace the yards round to port ! Stand by topsail—haulyards and sheets !’

“These orders were barely carried into effect, when a sudden and tremendous squall struck the ship. The small sails were clued up, and the topsailyards on the caps; but the gallant little bark staggered under the shock, lay over till her gunwale almost touched the water, struggled for a moment, and then rose again. The squall had overtaken them with lightning-like rapidity, and was gone again almost as quickly. A few moments before, and a neater and snugger ship never swam the water—now, she was almost a wreck aloft. The foretopmast was hanging over the side, the jib-boom gone, the maintop-gallant-mast snapped short above the step, and the maintopsail in tatters. All this desolation had been the work of a moment; the demon of the storm had passed, and all was again calm.

“‘Thank Heaven it’s no worse !’ said the captain. ‘Two minutes sooner, and we should all have been lost ! Better lose a few sticks than the ship herself. But this will be a warning to you, Mr Rogers,’ said he to the mate, ‘not to be foolhardy for the future.’

“All hands were immediately set to work to clear away the wreck of the spars, and were busily employed all night. It was late in the forenoon before the wreck of the foretopmast was launched clear of the ship, and a new maintopsail bent. During this interval, a light breeze had sprung up, and a strange sail hove in sight to windward. The captain mounted the rigging, and got his glass to bear upon her, and, after a long and anxious look, paced the quarterdeck with hurried and irregular steps, glancing uneasily aloft, and hailing the men to bear a hand with their mast-ropes.

“‘Rogers,’ said he to the mate, at the same time handing him the glass, ‘take a look at that craft, and tell me what you think of her.’

“The mate looked long and carefully at her, and, return-

ing the glass to his superior, looked doubtingly and inquiringly in his face, and shook his head—

“‘I don’t like the look of her at all, sir.’

“‘Nor I, Rogers; however, we’ll say nothing about her just now. If the air continues so light, it will take her some time to reach us, and we must make good use of the opportunity. Hurry the men with the topmast. Heaven send us a cloudy night! As soon as it is dark, we’ll alter our course.’

“By dint of hard work, and a suspicion among the crew that the stranger was an unpleasant neighbour, we were all ataunto, as the sailors call it, before midnight, and were standing away before the light breeze. At daylight, the captain’s glass swept the horizon, and soon rested upon the object of his search. A long and steady gaze seemed to confirm both him and the mate in their first suspicion. The vessel, now considerably nearer us, had been evidently watching our motions, and was as evidently in pursuit of us. She was a long, low, rakish-looking brig, creeping along before the faint breeze, and aiding its efforts with her sweeps.

“‘It’s the Dare-Devil, sir!’ said the mate, his check paling as he spoke; ‘I know her now by the black fiddlehead, and her mast-heads black. A bloodier pirate never swam. The Lord have mercy upon us, for *he* won’t!’

“‘Call the hands aft!’ said the captain.

“The men assembled on the quarterdeck in stern silence. They seemed to anticipate what was to follow; but it was evident theirs was not the quietness of fear, but of determination.

“‘My lads,’ said the captain, ‘that stranger, we have every reason to believe, is a pirate. If there had been anything of a breeze, we might have escaped; but now, our only chance is to show her what mettle we’re made of. You will have to fight for your lives; for so soon as they set foot

on this deck, they will murder every soul on board. What say you, my lads? Will you die like dogs, or fighting like brave men?’

“A simultaneous cheer from the crew was the only reply, and they were immediately dismissed to prepare for the impending conflict.

“‘Ah, there she shows her teeth at last,’ said the captain, as a puff of smoke burst from the brig, followed by the flash and report of a gun, the ball from which struck the water some distance from us.

“‘It is of no use our attempting to escape, Rogers!’ said the captain; ‘he is gaining upon us fast. We will not fire a gun till he is close aboard of us, and till every shot will tell.’

“The guns were all loaded with grape, the fire-arms placed in readiness on deck, and the men ordered to lie down at their quarters, and not to fire a shot till the order was given. Meantime, the pirate rapidly approached, and her shot began to tell upon our rigging and sails. The *Delight* kept steadily on her course; but her yards, which had been nearly square, were drawn quietly forward, one by one, to port. The pirate was sweeping up at some little distance on our quarter, and had hailed us to heave to directly, or she would sink us. ‘Now, my lads,’ said our captain, ‘be cool and steady. I’m going to cross his hawse: as soon as the guns bear upon him, blaze away.’

“The helm was put a-starboard, and, as we crossed the bows, we poured our grape into him. The fire was not such a *raking* one as we expected; for he was too quick for us, and sheered to port almost as soon as ourselves; but it was evident that we had almost sickened him, for he widened his distance, and before night was almost hull-down to windward of us.

“‘I hope we have got rid of our troublesome customer, sir,’ said Rogers to the captain.

“Don't halloo till you're through the wood,” replied he; ‘we haven't done with him yet, I'm afraid. I'm much mistaken if he is not trying to play a game at humbug with us; as soon as it is dark, he will edge down upon us, and endeavour to take us by surprise. We will keep the men at quarters all night, and haul close to the wind, on the starboard tack, when darkness comes on.”

“At nightfall strict orders were given that all the lights should be put out, except that in the binnacle; and the ship's course was altered. We were in great hopes that by these means we should elude the pursuit of the pirate; for, though the breeze was still light, the night was dark and cloudy, and the mate, after sweeping the horizon with his night-glass, said, in a joyous tone, to the captain—

“‘I think we have outwitted him, sir; I see no signs of him now.’

“‘Let *me* look,’ said the captain. ‘Holloa! What is that dark body to the northward? That infernal brig, I'll be bound. How could he have seen us?’

As he spoke, his eye glanced aloft, and there, to his great surprise, was a light shining at the mizentop-gallantmasthead!

“‘What light is that?’ shouted he; ‘who has dared to disobey the orders? Jump up there, one of you boys, and douce it. Rogers, there's a traitor on board.’

“‘Then Jose is the man, sir!’

“‘The Delight had lost a few hands in harbour, by fever; and, a few days before she sailed, a Portuguese seaman had been shipped to supply the place of one of them. He was an active, able-bodied fellow, and produced excellent certificates from former ships; but there was something extremely forbidding and repulsive in his countenance, and the mate was very unwilling to obey Captain Forbes's order to receive him on board. He was a man of few words; but his eyes were constantly wandering, with a furtive glance,

round the ship; and, when he did speak, it was generally to express his fear of pirates, and to inquire into the means of defence, of the *Delight*. On the evening before the ship sailed, he went on shore as one of the boat's crew, but did not make his appearance again till next morning. For this breach of duty he made some plausible excuse, which was unfortunately accepted. It was afterwards proved that he was one of the crew of the pirate, and had been employed to gain all the information in his power, as to our guns, time of sailing, &c., and to make private signals, if necessary.

"The brig kept hovering about till daylight, and then bore down upon us, and, when within range, fired a shot across our bows, to make us heave to. To this salutation no answer was returned, but we stood steadily on, as before, reserving our fire for closer quarters. Shot after shot was dropped into us, but still not a hand was moved on board. At last the pirate came within hail, and swore with the most horrid oaths that he would sink us, if we did not immediately heave to.

" 'Now, my lads, stand by!' The men were on their feet in a moment. 'Starboard a little! Fire!' Again our grape rattled into her, and we could judge, by the bustle on her decks, and by the loud cries and execrations that reached our ears, that our fire had been a destructive one. Two of our men were killed by his discharge, and our boat amidships smashed to pieces; but he again sheered off, and, shaking his sails in the wind, dropped slowly astern. Again our hopes revived, but only to be miserably disappointed. When he was beyond the range of our short carronades, he kept dropping shot after shot into us, with deadly precision from his long gun.

" 'Rogers,' said the captain, 'if this game lasts long, it is all up with us; unless the breeze freshens, we shall all be murdered like so many sheep.'

“In vain did we endeavour to come to closer quarters with him; as we shortened sail, so did he. Our guns were useless, while—crash—crash—crash—followed each remorseless shot from his long twelve. The breeze, instead of freshening, gradually died away to a calm, and we lay entirely at his mercy, for he kept sweeping round us, and, unhurt himself, inflicted deadly injuries upon us. At last, we lay a complete wreck upon the water; our gallant captain was killed, and fifteen of the men either dead or desperately wounded, and the gallant, but exhausted remnant of the crew were persuaded by the mate to consent to surrender. Our colours were accordingly hauled down; yet the pirate for some time paid no attention to this mark of submission on our part, but seemed determined to gratify his thirst for slaughter, by putting his threat of sinking us into execution. At last he ceased firing, and, sweeping up on our quarter, hailed to order the captain of the *Delight* on board.

“‘Our captain is killed, and we have not a boat left that can swim.’

“‘Oh, then, if you can’t come to me, I must go and fetch you!’ A boat, well manned, soon pushed off from the pirates, and in a few minutes dashed alongside of us. The first man who boarded us was the captain, as ferocious-looking a monster as I ever beheld; and his followers, who swarmed up the side after him, were, in appearance, worthy of their leader. They rushed on board with cries of exultation and rage, brandishing their cutlasses, and shouting, ‘Down with them!’ ‘Cut them down, and make an end of them at once!’ And they were proceeding to put their threats into execution, when they were checked in a moment by the loud and commanding tones of the captain. ‘Stand back, all of you! I’ll shoot the first man that lays a hand upon them! No, no, my lads; it would be letting the rascals off too cheap to kill them at once; we’ll despatch them in pairs at a time; there are twelve of them, so we shall

have six days' sport instead of one.' This proposal was received with shouts of savage joy by the crew. 'We'll keep these two till the last,' continued he, pointing to the mate and myself, 'that they may have the pleasure of seeing all their comrades walk the plank before them. But, come my lads, be smart; we have no time to lose; put all these fellows on board our little hooker; and then we'll see what's to be done below.' We were all immediately forced into the boat, and rowed on board the brig, where some of us were put in irons, and others lashed to ring-bolts on the deck. The boat then returned, and the work of plunder commenced; and for some hours the pirate crew were busily employed in transferring to the brig all the valuables they could lay their hands upon on board the *Delight*. When they had taken everything available, they scuttled the ship, and left her, and obliged us, with many taunts and blows, to watch for the catastrophe. It was a heartrending sight to us all to see our gallant little ship gradually settling in the water, rolling deep and uneasily, till at last, after a heavy lurch, she dipped her bulwarks low into the water, and, struggling in vain to recover herself, sank to rise no more. A groan of horror burst from us all; we felt as if our last connecting link with humanity was broken; we were left powerless in the hands of monsters in human form, but with the spirit of demons. Alas! our fears were but too well verified: that very evening two of our poor shipmates, after having been tormented in the most savage manner, were blindfolded, and compelled to walk out upon a plank launched from the gangway, from the end of which they fell into the sea, shrieking with horror as they fell. As their bodies plunged heavily into the smooth water, the captain turned to us with a savage sneer, and said—

“ ‘They were too well fed by half; when it comes to your turn, you won't make such a disturbance amongst the fishes.’ ”

"But why need I dwell longer upon these horrors? For five succeeding days, the same murderous scene was enacted; we were fed on bread and water, and tormented in every way that cruelty could suggest, and then had the horror of witnessing the death of our companions, and of anticipating the same cruel fate for ourselves. At last the mate and I were the only survivors, and we were brought to the gangway, to mount the same fatal plank which had been the instrument of death to our unfortunate ship-mates. Our eyes were blindfolded, and, weak and exhausted as we were, we looked forward to death as an easy and happy release from our miseries. We bade each other farewell.

"'Our murderers allow us one blessing, Rogers,' said I—'to die together.'

"That remark saved my life.

"'A blessing is it?' exclaimed the captain; 'then it's one that I'll be hanged if you enjoy. You shall go to the devil by yourself. Take the handkerchief off that sentimental gentleman's eyes, and let him see his dear friend take a leap in the dark. He can moralise about it till to-morrow evening.'

"Poor Rogers! I did indeed feel deserted, when the sullen plunge announced that the sea had closed over its prey! To this refinement in cruelty on the part of the pirate, however, I eventually owed my deliverance. Slowly and painfully did the first hours of that night pass over my head. My thoughts constantly recurred to the horrors I had witnessed, and to the dreadful doom that awaited me on the morrow. The tears filled my eyes as I prayed for forgiveness of my past sins, and for strength to support me through the coming trial. The brig was tumbling about on the almost calm sea, with all sails furled, except the topgallantsail, which by some chance had broken adrift, and the crew, not excepting the look-out man, were all

asleep, when all at once the report of a gun came booming over the water. The sound acted like magic upon the slumbering crew—they were on the alert in a moment—the sails were set with wonderful quickness—the sweeps were manned, and the little schooner rippling through the water. Next morning we had distanced the stranger considerably, and the pirate was in great hopes of escaping; but the breeze freshened, and before noon the frigate, for such she proved to be, had gained so much upon us, that her shot began to tell upon us. I was now hurried below, and a sentry was placed over me; the captain ordering him to blow my brains out if I attempted to escape, and adding, ‘I’ll settle his account by and by.’ It was with impatience almost amounting to agony that I listened to the strange medley of sounds which reached my ear—the creaking of the sweeps, the curses and shouts of our crew cheering each other at their work, the loud report of our guns, and the more faint and distant sound of those of the frigate; and I prayed for deliverance—prayed that some lucky ball might find its way into the cabin, and put an end to my suspense and to my miseries at once. At last the sound of the sweeps ceased. I heard the rattling of blocks and the sound of running feet. I felt, by the motion of the vessel, that some alteration was made in her course, and then—I burst into tears—I heard a voice hailing the brig! I felt that the hour of my deliverance was at hand, and I breathed a prayer of silent thankfulness to Heaven. Again there was a movement on deck, the brig laid over to the breeze, and a loud shout burst from her crew, as they discharged the guns. Merciful powers! she had escaped; and my spirit sank within me. But the avenger of blood was behind us, and his voice spoke in the thunder of his guns. I heard a crash upon deck, then the noise of something coming down from aloft, followed by the muttered curses of my sentry, as he exclaimed, ‘The gaff is gone!’ The report of the

frigate's guns now became louder and louder, and the little brig absolutely staggered, when the grape-shot rattled against her sides. Her crew, however, seemed to be fighting with the desperation of madmen, for they maintained a warm fire. At last all was silent on board; the firing ceased, and not even a voice could be heard. Presently I heard the dash of oars; then the grating of a boat against the vessel's side; then loud and angry voices, and afterwards all the sounds of a desperate conflict. I looked up the companion—my sentinel had deserted his post, to join in the fray. I saw the boat's crew of the frigate engaged in a deadly struggle with the pirates. I rushed over to them, and had just joined them, calling for help, when the pirate captain seized me by the shoulder, and raised his tomahawk to cleave me to the deck. Weak as I was, I must have fallen a victim to his fury, had not a gallant sailor rushed between us, and inflicted a severe wound upon his upraised arm. I saw my brave deliverer fall immediately afterwards by a pistol-shot; but he was well avenged; for the next moment the pirate fell lifeless on his body. I saw no more. I was carried, in a state of insensibility, on board the frigate, and it was long before I recovered from the effects of my severe discipline on board the pirate. As soon as I was sufficiently recovered, I wished to hasten homewards immediately; but I was obliged to remain, to give evidence against the crew of the piratical brig, all of whom, with the exception of three or four, suffered the extreme penalties of the law. And now, my dear father, my tale is at an end, and grateful am I to the merciful Providence which has restored me to your arms."

"My dear, dear son!—doubly endeared to me by the dangers you have undergone on my account—I am thankful that my altered fortunes now enable me to gratify what I know to be the dearest wish of your heart. Go to her, John—go to Miss Winterton—she is worthy of you: no

longer restrained by the clog of poverty, you may freely indulge the feelings of your heart."

As the father and son were walking along the road, they saw two men approaching them at some distance.

"Whom have we here?" said John Hamilton.

"One of them is old Willie Duncan, a cottar of mine; and who the lame man is that is with him I know not. By the by, I heard that his son was returned from sea; perhaps that's the man."

Willie Duncan respectfully saluted his master, when he approached, and said—

"I was just bringing my son to ——"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed John Hamilton, gazing earnestly at the disabled man; "it cannot be—yes, it is—my brave deliverer! My gallant fellow," continued he, shaking him heartily by the hand, "how rejoiced I am to see you, and to have an opportunity to prove my gratitude to you! I heard you were dead—how did you escape?"

"Why, blow me, your honour, if you didn't take me quite aback. I couldn't make you out at first—you're twice the man you were when I see'd you on the pirate's deck; and I'd never no thoughts of falling in with you so near home. I'm right glad, however, to see your honour once more."

"Duncan," said Hamilton, senior, with a trembling voice, "I owe you a debt I can never repay. You lost your limb in saving the life of my son—it shall be my endeavour to make the loss to you as light as possible."

"And is the gentleman the son of my father's good master? Then a fig for the leg!—it couldn't have been lost in a better cause. And, as for gratitude, sir, you owe me none; his honour, here, would have done the same for me, if the case had been reversed, like—if he'd been the sailor, and I'd been the gemman."

"Well, well, my good fellow—no doubt—we won't argue

on that point; only tell me how I can serve you, and I will do so, to the best of my ability."

"Why, your honour, I wants for nothing just now. I've got a lot of prize-money, and my father's snug roadstead to anchor in; but, if your honour likes to give me a few ounces of baccy, I won't say but what I'll be obligated to you."

"A modest request, certainly," said Mr Hamilton, laughing; "but we must give you something better than tobacco, and as much of that as you like into the bargain. Come, William, as your son won't speak, you must do so for him. Tell me how I can best serve him."

A whispering consultation here took place between father and son, which was put a stop to by the latter addressing Mr Hamilton in a sheepish, confused manner, twirling his hat in his hands at the same time, and feeling the rim all around, as if to ascertain that it was all there.

"Why, your honour, as your honour's so kind —— Blow'd if I can speak about it, father! You see, your honour, I'm a first-rate hand at a yarn on a Saturday night; but, somehow, my jawing-tacks gets all bedevilled when I begins to speak about *she*."

"And who's she?" said Mr Hamilton, laughing—"some old sweetheart that has been waiting for you?"

"Why, it's bonny Jean Cameron that was when I went away. She's a widow now, your honour, and, as I wants to be spliced, and she's no objection, why, if it's not making too bold, if your honour would let us have one of your empty cottages, we'd join company at once, and sail together for the rest of our cruise."

We need hardly say that the sailor's request was cheerfully granted; and in a few weeks he and his wife were happily settled in a neat cottage, comfortably and substantially furnished by Mr Hamilton, who likewise settled upon him an annuity, sufficient to keep him from want, but not

so large as to encourage habits of idleness or dissipation. John Hamilton was equally successful in his suit; and his union with Ellen Winterton proved that those who have been tried by adversity are best qualified to enjoy prosperity.

THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.

THE THREE BRETHREN.

“ Together such as brethren are,
In unity to dwell.”

THE unity of the three brethren about whom I am going to speak is complete: some are united in heart and soul, but these are united in body and frame: closer than the Siamese twins did their union abide, till, in an evil hour, the winds smote them, and they were no more—“*Sed stat nominis umbra.*” They have left behind them a name and a record which will not soon perish. They might have said—had speaking been at all their forte—with Horace, “*Non omnis moriar.*” They shall live in the recollection of the present, and in the records of future times—at least it will not be from want of will, if the pages of the “Tales of the Borders” do not transmit their memorial to late posterity. The three brethren! you exclaim, quite naturally enough. What! were they brothers by blood or by marriage—brothers in profession—or, like Simeon and Levi, in iniquity? We should like to see the mist cleared away, and the subject made tangible. Well, listen!

The three brethren were three trees, or rather divisions of one tree—as like each other as one pea is to another—which once stood in the middle of the high road from Glasgow to Dumfries, upon the banks of the Nith. People had it that their similarity was so great that it reached the details of their branches, and even leaves, and that they were in every—even in the minutest—respect copies or fac-similes of each other. Nobody living—and far less any one dead—can tell their age. They saw Oliver Cromwell and his saintly crew

march into Scotland; and beheld, in later times, the Highland host, in the year '45, pass along. They might have given an old chronicle of ancient times and manners, had it not been that they probably did not outlive the age of Methuselah. But

“ Improvisa vis lethi rapuit
Rapietque gentes.”

Destruction came in the shape of a nor'wester, and they are now in the act of being converted into snuff-boxes, writing-desks, and dressing-cases, for their old and attached acquaintances and friends; every one seems more anxious than another to obtain a relic of the immortal triumvirate—and they are more likely to be remembered with pleasurable feelings than even were the Triumvirates of ancient Rome. But now that they have bowed their heads, and given up their roots, it is proper that some effort should be made to perpetuate their memory; and who so fit as an old Closeburn man to execute this bold but praiseworthy task?

The explanation, however, requires a glance at the race of gipsies, one of whom thus characterises the race:—

“ My bonny lass, I work in brass—
A tinkler is my station—
I've travell'd round all Christian ground
In this my occupation.
I've ta'en the gold—I've been enroll'd
In many a noble squadron—
In vain they search'd, when off I march'd,
To go and clout the caldron.”

The gipsies have now disappeared entirely from the north of Scotland; even in Fife, the former residence of the gipsy clan Jamphrey, no such variety of the species is to be found. Their chief residence, as we have had occasion to say before, is now on the Borders, where, in the village of Yetholm, and in Langtown, they still maintain a separate clanship. They still are, and have always been, extremely jealous of

the marriage of any of their daughters, in particular, out of the tribe. Hence the fact, that almost every third person amongst them labours under some mental peculiarity or defect. Their male youths enjoy greater latitude; yet, on their alliance with the Philistine fair, they are usually looked down upon, and regarded as a kind of amphibious race, who, like the "Proselytes of the Gate" amongst the Jews, were not admitted into equal communion. Their children are brought up (at least were so, till of late) in the most religious contempt of the alphabet. Nor are any moral principles inculcated, beyond successful thieving—that is, downright knavery—and dexterity of execution as workmen, whether it be in forming a ram's horn into a cutty spoon, or in appropriating the fattest hens from the farmer's bauks. Their women, too, are expert fortune-tellers, and have husbands ready-made for sixpence. They are a fearful, fearless race, wandering about, in former times, almost during the whole year, and pitching their tents—in other words, setting their asses to graze, and themselves to forage—wherever solitude or the tolerance of the laird or farmer will permit their presence. When Scotland in general, and Dumfries-shire in particular, from Criffell to Corsincon, were densely covered with natural wood, these people divided the woodland with the fox, the boar, and the wolf, and were extremely expert in noosing hares, rabbits, and polecats. Theirs was the bow, and ultimately the long-barrelled gun, for securing the fowls of heaven; and the set line, liester, and fishing-rod for the tenants of the water.

As was the case with the Roman of old—" *Patres ad insignem deformitatem puerum cito necaverunt;*" in other words, and in a different tongue, they put their diseased and deformed offspring to death; and more than one-half of those which were permitted to survive were killed in a year or two by harsh usage, cold, and imperfect clothing.

Thus their youth which did survive these manifold trials and risks rose up into man and womanhood, proud, hardy, strong, well-seasoned plants, exhibiting much muscular power and symmetry in the male, and occasionally uncommon beauty and figure in the female form.

The "wild gazelle exulting" and bounding on the hills of Judah was not more elastic in its motion, nor penetrating and fascinating in its glance, than were many of the fairer wives and daughters of these hordes of part mendicant, part predatory, and part artist wanderers. Their chief resorts, in ancient times, were to the banks of the Hermitage and Slitterick, near Hawick; to the banks of the Dee, near Kirkcudbright; and, above and beyond all, to the woods of Colliston, and the linns of Balachun, on the Nith, in Dumfries-shire; and it is to this last locality that the following narrative particularly refers.

It was about the middle of the month of October that a packman, or pedlar, with an enormous chest laid transverse on his shoulders, was seen wending his way up the banks of the Nith, from Manchester to Glasgow. He had hoped to have reached Thornhill, then an exceedingly small village, before dusk; but this being his first migration in this direction, he found himself so surrounded and obstructed by the river Nith on the one hand, the linns of Balachun on the other, and an almost impenetrable wood in front, that night came upon him, dark and moonless, whilst still pushing his way through brambles, thorns, and every species of tangling and perplexing underwood. At last, despairing of extricating himself, and terrified, at the same time, by the roaring of waters, howling of wild beasts, and hooting of owls, he extricated his shoulders from the pack-bands, and, selecting as dry and soft an apartment as circumstances permitted, he set himself down on the grassy turf, with a birch branch for his canopy, and the old stump of a tree for his lean. In a little time he was alarmed by the cries of

what appeared to be a child in the act of being cruelly murdered. Mungo Clark (for such was the packman's name) rose, and, advancing a few steps in the direction of the now faintly-emitted sounds, found a hare in the act of expiring of strangulation by means of a noose, or girth, formed of strong wire, and placed so as to intercept a little footpath made by the feet of the wild animals of the forest. Mungo was in the act of disengaging the dead creature from its executioner, the noose, when he heard the rustling as if of a lion on the spring, very near him, and all at once he found himself in the iron gripe of a customer with whom he had no wish, on this occasion at least, to deal.

"And wha are ye," were the sounds which, in a hollow and harsh tone, first greeted his ears—"and wha are ye, man, wha hae made yer bed this dark night wi' the howlets and the wull-cats—ye wha meddle wi' what naething concerns ye, and burn yer fingers in ither folk's kail-pats? Speak, man, and dinna keep me blethering here, for I hae got ither fish to fry, I trow, than standing here palavering wi' sic as you—come, speak, body, or I'll send ye, pack an' a', sixty yards lower into the bumbling pool o' Balachun Linn."

Mungo Clark was neither soldier nor belted knight, nor was he armed for any deadly conflict; but he was not accustomed to submit without resentment to such rough usage.

"Unhand me, rascal!" was the packman's reply; and making, at the same time, a lateral jerk, he twisted himself fairly out of the assailant's grasp.

A whistle was immediately set up, and in an instant our traveller was surrounded by four strong, able-bodied men, who immediately flashed the light side of a dark lantern full in his face.

"Oh ho!" said one of the newly-assembled assailants; "this is neither the deil, nor the factor, nor the wood-keeper,

nor the old boy, Colliston himsel, but just plain Mungo Clark, Widow Clark o' Penpont's son, who has been at Manchester feathering his pack, for the first time, wi' all manner o' varieties; such as Bibles, psalm-books, ribands, shawls, and waistcoat-pieces. Why, by the flesh-pots o' Yetholm—and that's a terrible oath—we'll adopt Brother Clark into our number, and teach him how to snare game, and spear salmon, instead of drivelling away his time and strength under the pressure of a load" (trying to raise the pack) "which would break the back-bone of an elephant."

The matter appeared to Mungo to be settled without any consent of his, asked or obtained; so, knowing somewhat of the character and habits of this wandering and peculiar race, he was compelled to make a virtue of necessity, and, raising his pack again on his shoulders, to descend with them into the very lowest depths of the linns of Balachun. Even at noonday, on the 23d of June, the Pass, as it is called, is dreary, dark, and dreadful; but now, under the cover of night, and with no other guidance than a small lantern, which scarcely made darkness visible, Mungo hesitated ere he would commit himself to the crossing of a fearful gully, and the walking along the face of a rock, or scaur, scarcely eight inches wide, and overhanging a fearful pool, well known by the terrible appellation of "Hell's Caldron." The party at last arrived at a small grassy plot, encircled on the one side by the roaring stream called Clauchry Burn, and on the other by an amphitheatre of steep, high, and overhanging rocks, fringed and darkened in with brushwood and furze, and guarded, at the upper and lower extremities, by the rocks, which, after receding a little to make room for this grassy retreat, closed in again upon the current, and prevented all *easy* entrance or escape. Soon after Mungo's arrival, he discovered a large kettle, boiling and bubbling, in a crevice of the cliff, suspended from a transverse beam; and beheld around it, now that a parcel of sticks and dry

leaves were kindled, a most picturesque and motley group—women, children, men, boys, and lasses, of all hues, aspects, and sizes, were scattered about in profusion; and, as the flame flashed back from the red sandstone of the linn, their faces glared on Mungo with a demoniac expression. It seemed the very picture of Pandemonium; and yet the hearty laugh, the bold oath, and the occasional inquiry, bespoke the inhabitants to be at least one remove from devils. Mungo was desired to rest him and his load on the apron of the rock, and compelled, without a nay-say, to unstrap his pack, and expose his goods, not (seemingly) for sale, but for plunder. This was not the way, assuredly, to turn the penny to advantage, but what can one say, "*durum telum necessitas?*"—there was no avoiding the spoliation. To be sure, the king, or leader of the gipsy tribe—amounting probably to not less than forty or fifty persons—hinted in his ear that he should not be a loser at last; but, in the meantime, to his no small mortification, he saw his shawls, napkins, stockings, and waistcoat-pieces, making the round of the company without ceremony, and forgetting, like the dove from the ark, to return whence they had fled. The pack having been thus ransacked, and the pot having given audible intimation for some time of its preparatory doings, the king—for such he was—the notorious Donald Faa, with his three sons, Duncan, Cuthbert, and *Donnert* Davie, together with the king's fair daughter, Helen Yetholm Faa, squatted down on the grass, and without the help of forks, made a hearty meal on hares, chickens, turkeys, geese, and half-a-dozen brace of partridges, which might have rejoiced the heart even of a Dominie Sampson. The other members of the community seemed to acknowledge the deputed authority of a young man of good features, and an athletic and genteel appearance, who went by the name of the Squire. After *eating* had had its fair share of devoted and unremitted attention, a barrel, of considerable dimensions, began to make its way downward from

amidst the recesses of this water-worn and excavated rock; and a tub being hurled sideways into the service, boiling water was procured, and sugar in no ordinary quantity commingled; and, by the help of a ladle and several chopin decanters, the whole mass of Egyptian humanity was stirred up into song, laugh, scream, inebriety, quarrel, battle, stupor, and insensibility. Our friend Mungo had no objections whatever to the feast, or to the means by which it was prolonged. He was afterwards notorious for his drinking habits, inso-much that his observation on this occasion is still repeated in the neighbourhood of the place of his nativity. When questioned by the king respecting the size of his native village, Penpont, his reply was—"It is an exceeding great city." This being questioned, his proof was equally ingenious, and descriptive of his habits—"Why, Nineveh took Jonah three days to travel through it, whereas Penpont generally takes me *seven*." He referred manifestly to his habit of stopping and drinking at every petty inn and public-house in the village! The jest told exceedingly in his favour. Mungo, however, in spite of his losses and crosses, had a noble night of it, as he afterwards said, with the gipsies, and awakened next morning from his grassy couch to cool his aching temples in the stream, and restore his stomach by a hair of the dog that had bit him. He then observed that the two sons, Duncan and Cuthbert, but not Davie (yclept Donnert, from his peculiarity of mental constitution), were absent, and that their father not only exhibited no surprise respecting his sons' absence, but refused to give any account to his guest of the cause of it. Meanwhile, Mungo had an opportunity of marking the appearances of the various objects around him somewhat more distinctly than he had been able to do on the preceding evening. Blankets, supported by forked poles, old clothes and rags of every description, formed a kind of nightly shelter for the common herd; whilst the royal head reposed in the

midst of his male progeny, on the lap of a projecting rock, with a few hare-skins for his pillow, and a corn-sack for his coverlet. His fair daughter's bedchamber was somewhat more removed beyond a projecting corner of the winding linn, and she was protected from observation by the branches of the overhanging trees being drawn closely down over her, and by what had once, in all probability, been a soldier's tent, but which was now miserably rent, and unweather-worthy. It was manifest that this child was the darling and care of a fond father; for she was not only provided in a superior manner, but, by the position of his own sleeping apartment, she was protected from all intercourse with the other members of the tribe. Honest nature! thou art too many, even for a gipsy life; and even here parental affection hallowed and refined what was unseemly and revolting. I say revolting; for, in an obscure corner, and under the shelter of a hazel-bush, lay a figure, emaciated with disease, and probably with dissipation and crime, groaning in agony, and regarded with no more sympathy by the great mass of the tribe than if he had been a strangled hare or a mangled horse. There was something indeed terrible in this sight. True, Helen Faa did all that she was permitted, but that was but little, to alleviate his sufferings; but death was in his eye and in his throat—he made one great effort to rise, grasped a branch convulsively, and ceased to live. Mungo would willingly have retired, even with the losses he had sustained, but he was not permitted—probably because old Donald conjectured that information would be immediately lodged against him, and he would be compelled to relinquish one of his strongest holds in the south of Scotland. Meantime, Mungo had an opportunity of beholding more closely the female portion of this society; and was exceedingly struck—for he was yet a young man and unmarried—with the really handsome faces and well-formed persons which characterised the whole; but far and away above all

the rest shone Miss Helen Yetholm Faa—for thus was she designated by the clan—in the pride of health, youth, and black, or rather brown, eyes—those weapons of female onset which are sharper than a two-edged sword, as Mungo used to sing or say afterwards, in a song which he composed on the occasion:—

“ They were jet, jet black, and like a hawk,
And wadna let a body be.”

All this seemed to be fully appreciated by the Squire, who evidently paid the young princess particular attention, and seemed, at the same time, sufficiently jealous of any foreign interference with the object of his attention. Donnert Davie was a stout, ill-made, squint-eyed being, who stammered in his speech, and seemed particularly useful in carrying on the culinary operations, under the direction of Helen, in the retreat. He felled wood for the fire, carried water to the kettle, heated cow and sheep horns in the flame; brought round about and close to the operator old pots, pans, and trenchers, which had been obtained to be clouted, clasped, and mended. He was, in short, a kind of gipsy factotum; and when “the house affairs did not call him thence,” he would associate with the stranger, stammering out such incoherent inquiries as—“Whare been?—What do?—What do?—Mother dead?—Mother dead?—Yes—yes—yes—true—true—true”—muttering to himself, and repeating the same monosyllable half-a-dozen times. His sister Helen was manifestly kind to him, and would not permit any of the company to insult or ill-use him.

Night arrived, but with it not Duncan or Cuthbert; and it was not till late on the following evening that they made their appearance, and with them came silver and gold in abundance: consequently Mungo Clark's claims were satisfied; and he was informed that, next morning, as they were all about to decamp, he might pursue his journey homewards; but about the following dawn, an authoritative voice

from the top of the precipice summoned the whole party to a surrender. One figure stood prominently forward, looking over the rock; and Donnert Davie, whose blunderbuss always lay charged beside him, immediately fired, and the figure came tumbling down headlong, and sunk in the yawning abyss of boiling water. In a word, the whole party, after a most determined resistance, were taken prisoners by a military party obtained from Dumfries; and it being proved against Duncan and Donald Faa that they had stolen some cattle from Dalswinton Mains, and sold them on the sands of Dumfries—as also against Donnert Davie, that he had shot the serjeant who commanded on the occasion—the whole three brothers were tried, condemned, and sentenced to be executed, *in terrorem*, near the spot where their depredations had been committed. As there were three persons to execute, and the famous tree already referred to had three branches, they appeared to the sheriff to be destined for each other; and accordingly all the three were hung at the same time on the same tree, which has ever since retained the appellation of “The Three Brethren.”

Old Donald, his fair daughter, Mungo Clark, Squire Cockburn, and the rest, were set at liberty; but the gipsies were conveyed by a military escort across the Borders; and I have been given to understand that the Squire, who was the young laird of Glenae, after considerable opposition from the old father, was married to fair Helen Yetholm Faa; and that he was the happy husband of the fair dame who used afterwards to go about the country in disguise, attending in gipsy garb at weddings, kirns, and merry-meetings, and giving origin to the well-known reel—“Auld Glenae.”

THE MISTAKE RECTIFIED.

“Now,” said the traveller, as he wandered up one of those retired Highland glens, which characterise and beautify the

Grampian range, "I shall once more visit my dear father and mother; and my sister, now woman grown; and, what is more, my sweet Helen M'Donald, who used to gather the mountain berries along with me, and pursue the little kids and lambs. Ah, Helen was only about thirteen years old when I left; she will now be eighteen; a full-grown beautiful woman, I have no doubt. I wonder if old Andrew, her grandfather, be still living; he used to tell me such tales of Prince Charlie, and Prestonpans, and Culloden, that my hair yet almost stands erect at the recollection of them. And then there was Euphemia M'Gregor, his son's wife, the mother of my dear Helen; and Oscar and Fingal, my father's faithful attendants and servants: and we had such fun during the long winter nights, when the sheep were in a place of safety, and the door was barred, and the peat-fire was burning clear, and the very cat and kitten enjoyed the cheery fireside—such questions and commands, such guessing and forfeiting, and riding round the fire on a besom, and holding one's mouth full of water to discharge on the person's face who should first laugh at our grotesque gestures and looks: but night is approaching whilst I linger by the way—my whole heart heaves to behold once more the sweet home of my youth and innocence."

Thus said, or thought aloud, a young man, seemingly about twenty-two years of age, as he ascended Glen—and approached the thatched shieling which stood on the margin of a small mountain stream, which wended its mazes along the tortuous glen. He had been five years, come the time, absent from his mountain home, and had, during that period, endured and encountered a variety of fortune. He sung as he went along—

"A light heart and thin pair of breeches,
Goes through the world, brave boys!"

switching the bent and heather-bells with his cane, and treading with a step as elastic as was his bosom. At last,

just as the sun was tinging with his departing ray the top of the highest mountain in the neighbourhood, he turned the corner of a projecting rock, and came at once into full and distinct view of his home. It was then grey twilight, and objects began to assume an indistinct appearance. Walking by the side of the stream, as if meditating, there appeared a figure wrapped up in a Highland plaid. It immediately struck the young sailor that this was his sister; and in order to give her what is called an agreeable surprise, he stepped aside unperceived by her, and stood concealed behind a projecting cliff, which the stream had stripped bare of soil in its passing current. The figure came nearer and nearer, and then, sighing deeply, uttered some sound, which his ear could not catch. At last, tears and sobs followed, and he heard the words most distinctly pronounced—"Alas, I can never truly love him! I shall be the most wretched of women! But he whom I loved as angels love—oh, he, my own dear William M'Pherson, is dead and gone, and I can never see him more."

"But you can though, my own dear Helen;" and in an instant he held her lifeless and motionless in his arms. She had uttered just one awful scream, which was re-echoed by the surrounding cliffs, and had ceased to feel or know anything connected with the living world. Alas! she was dead, and he was distracted. He ran to the house, calling aloud for help; but every one of its inmates, even the mother who bore him, fled from his presence, uttering ejaculations, intimating the greatest terror at his presence. In vain did he protest with tears—I am your son and no other—I am Willie M'Pherson, your lost boy! His words bore no conviction along with him. Avaunt, foul fiend! Avaunt, in the name of God and the Holy Trinity—trouble me not—trouble me not; my dear child is in heaven; and thou, foul spirit, art permitted for a time to assume his shape. His sister, too, was equally incredulous, and his father had

not yet returned from the hill. What was to be done? Helen M'Donald was in all probability dead, or dying, helpless and alone, and yet no one would come to her assistance. At last, Oscar and Fingal made their appearance in advance of his father; and though they barked at first upon his naming them, they immediately ran up to him, and jumped upon his back, his neck, his head, his whole person. They seemed in as much danger of expressing joy as poor Helen had been of dying of fearful surprise.

"Stand back," said the delighted and believing father to his wife, who absolutely clung to his knees to prevent his advance — "stand back, woman; d'ye think Fingal and Oscar would caress the foul fiend in that manner? Na—na—na. Ha! ha! ha!" And he fell upon his son's shoulders, weeping and crying convulsively.

"My father—my dear, dear father."

"My son—my lost, my only, my restored son," was the response.

But Helen, in an instant, brought the whole party, consisting of father, mother, sister, and son, to her aid: a light was procured and held over her face; her bosom was bared, and rubbed; her forehead had water plentifully poured upon it from the stream; and, at last, symptoms of returning life appeared. Oscar and Fingal, in the meantime, had licked Helen's face, and neck, and shoulders, all over; and whether from any virtue in the peculiar touch of their tongues, or from the natural expiry of the trance, Helen breathed heavily—her bosom heaved; William looked on her cheeks, and they were flushed with red. In a moment he had her in his arms. Helen, for some time, suffered exquisite bodily torture; but was at last capable of having the truth made gradually known to her. She said surely she had been dreaming, as she had often done, and that she was still surely asleep, and that she would waken at last, as she had done before, to a dreadful percep-

tion of the reality. William M'Pherson still continued to clasp and assure Helen of his personal identity. But, even when convinced of the reality of William's presence, Helen did not evince that degree of happiness which might have been expected; she sat stupified and passive, and seemingly insensible to everything around her; her mind was evidently wandering to a disagreeable subject. However, she was prevailed upon to return with the family into the house, and, worn out and fatigued, she was soon after put to rest in an adjoining apartment.

In the meantime, the young sailor was questioned minutely respecting the reason of his reappearance, after he had been so long reported, and believed by everybody, to be dead.

Without repeating his answer in his own words, which were interlarded with sea phrases, we may state, in general, that it was to the following purpose:—He had gone to Dundee, with the view of making some small purchases for the household, when he accidentally fell in with a recruiting party, who were beating up for marines for the fleet, then just returned from the capture of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen. Inexperienced as he was, he was enticed into a public-house on the shore, and awakened, after a stupor of some hours, on board a British man-of-war. In a few hours, he was conveyed out to sea, along with several others, and was conveyed immediately to Spithead. Having it ultimately put to his choice whether he would stand by a gun, or handle a musket and a sabre, he chose the former, and was regularly entered as an able-bodied seaman on board His Majesty's ship the *Victory*. In her, along with Admiral Nelson, he sailed for the West Indies, and then crossed the Atlantic, back to the shores of France. The enemy still eluding the eagle-eye of Lord Nelson, he sailed for the Mediterranean, and, after various landings and inquiries, came upon the French fleet, moored closely

inland on the coast of Egypt, at the mouth of the Nile. He was in the dreadful battle of the Nile, and assisted in rescuing several who were blown up, but not killed, in the *L'Orient*. After the battle, he had promotion, and ultimately prize-money, on account of his brave and humane conduct, and sailed again for Naples, and latterly in quest of the Spanish fleet on the coast of Spain. He was close by Nelson when he was shot by a rifleman from the mast of the ship with which he had grappled, and saw the fellow who did the deed drop on the deck, being shot through the heart by a marine on board of Lord Nelson's ship. After the battle, he was returned to Plymouth, having been wounded in the leg—a musket-ball had passed through the flesh, and somewhat, but not greatly, injured the bone. He spent some months in the hospital, and was then despatched to the coast of France on board the *Spitfire*. There he had distinguished himself in cutting out and burning several of the enemy's craft at Havre; and being again wounded, though slightly, in the arm, he was put upon the pension list, and allowed to dispose of himself till his country should again require his services. In these circumstances, he began to think of his home; and, with some hundreds of pounds in the bank, and a pension order of about two shillings and sixpence a-day in his pocket, he arrived at Dundee in a sailing vessel, and was on his way to his *native glen* when the reader first became acquainted with him. When this narrative was finished, his father retired for an instant, and then appeared with some papers, which he had extracted from his private depositories. He first read a letter which purported to come from a king's officer, who signed himself William Wilson, and who informed his afflicted father that his son had been induced to go on board a king's ship, to see the arrangements which it exhibited; but that, in passing from the small boat to the deck, he had missed a foot, and been drowned. The letter was dated on board the

spitfire ; and mentioned, likewise, that the ship was under sailing orders for the general rendezvous at Spithead. The poor distracted parent had come to Dundee, but could obtain no information of his son—only, about three months after, he heard that a dead body, severely mutilated, had been thrown out upon the sands of St Andrews; and, on account of the state of its decomposition, had immediately been interred in Christian burial-ground. A second pilgrimage to St Andrews was undertaken by the father and daughter; but nothing satisfactory was discovered, except that the corpse exhibited marks of having been dressed in a blue-and-white striped waistcoat, which answered to that in which he had left Denhead, his home in the Highlands. After this last discovery, all further inquiry ceased, and the afflicted family fulfilled the period of their sincere mourning, and things returned nearly to their usual bearing. But, when father, and mother, and sister had seemingly got over the worst of their grief, Helen M'Donald still pined in silence over the recollections of her early companion; and as she expanded into womanhood, her grief seemed to grow "with her growth;" and her father became extremely anxious to have Helen properly and creditably disposed of in marriage.

The son of a small proprietor in the neighbourhood had lately become laird himself; and, though far exceeding Helen in years, having had frequent opportunities of seeing her, particularly at church on Sabbath, he had become enamoured of so much beauty and innocence. Proposals had been made to the father, which were immediately accepted; and the young lady had been dealt with, as young ladies in such situations generally are, by arguments of interest, and worldly comfort, and even grandeur. First impressions are deep (oh, how deep!); and Helen could not yet entirely exclude the image of her beloved William from her recollection. Laird M'Wharry was urgent in his suit—her father, whom she affectionately loved, was troubled

and anxious—her mother, too, pressed home upon her attention prudential considerations—so, after long delays and many internal struggles, Helen at last consented to become, but not till some months afterwards, Mrs or Lady M'Wharry, as the peasantry styled the laird's wife. It was during her visit (previous to her marriage) to M'Wharry that the incident took place which thus connects our narrative, and brings us up to the point of time when William M'Pherson arrived at Denhead.

William, learning from Helen, as well as from his father and mother, how matters were situated, suddenly disappeared, and left no means of tracing the place of his retreat. Days, and even weeks, passed, but no letter arrived, and no message came. In the meantime, the day appointed for the marriage approached, and Helen seemed to have made up her mind to submit to necessity; at least she tried to look cheerful, and put as good a face upon it as many tears, shed in private, would permit.

Laird M'Wharry was a true Highlander—he had much of that clannish feeling which is peculiar to the Celt. He was, besides, exceedingly passionate, and had more than once got into trouble from having used hasty and unguarded expressions. Nay, he had once been prosecuted in the Court of Session, and damages had been obtained to a considerable amount, by one of his servants, or rather slaves, whom he had beat most unmercifully. In attending a Perth market, he had occasion to ride homewards, after dark, with a brother proprietor, who had lately bought an estate in his neighbourhood. This proprietor could not boast a Celtic name or origin. He was plain Mr Monnipenny, from the town of Kirkcaldy, in Fife. They had both been drinking during the course of the day, and were, therefore, more liable to get into some dispute or quarrel. M'Wharry began by deprecating Mr Monnipenny's horse, whose character the master supported with some warmth; so,

to settle the matter, they both set off at the gallop, and the fire flashed from the horses' heels as they passed through Dunkeld. Unfortunately for Laird M'Wharry, however, about a mile beyond the above town, the saddle-girth gave way, and he came to the ground head foremost. He was dead when Mr Monnipenny came up with him. He had suffered a concussion of the brain; and, notwithstanding that medical aid was immediately obtained from Dunkeld, nothing could be done.

Poor Helen M'Pherson really mourned his fate; for, though she had no love for him, she had brought herself to think that it was her duty to fulfil her promise. But where was he whom her young heart held in its core? No one knew—no one could tell. Helen had inwardly resolved to live single on his account, even if no further accounts were received of William M'Pherson. But her father in the meantime died of a fever; and her mother was compelled to remove from the farm to the village of Dunkeld, where, in order to support herself and her lovely daughter, she set up a little shop with a small sum which her husband and she had saved, and was highly respected by all who knew her. In the meantime, the parish schoolmaster, an excise officer, and a wealthy sheep-farmer, all solicited Helen's hand; but she lent a deaf ear to all these offers, still thinking, and speaking, and dreaming about her William.

One day, when she was standing at the shop-door, she observed a crowd gathered about a horse and gig, out of which a person had just been thrown, and was taken up as was feared lifeless. Helen, from motives of humanity, rushed into the crowd to make inquiries, and saw the person carried into an adjoining apothecary's shop; there he was immediately bled, and, to the infinite satisfaction of all, had begun to recover. The fact turned out to be, that he had been stunned by the fall on his head, but no concussion or fracture had taken place. The gentleman, she

learned, had been put to bed, but was mighty unruly, as he insisted upon pursuing his journey that very evening into the Highlands; and a post-chaise, with two horses and a steady driver, had been brought to the apothecary's door, and the traveller was passing into it, with his head and arm tied up, when all at once Helen uttered a scream, and stood trembling betwixt him and the conveyance. It was her own William, returned from sea—to which he had again fled—and making all despatch to reach Denhead, as he had learned, on his way towards the Highlands, the fate that had overtaken the bridegroom, Laird M'Wharry. Now, reader, you and I part—I can do no more for you; for, if you cannot far better conceive than I can describe what followed, you can be no reader of mine—you will never have perused the story at all. William was now comfortably circumstanced, pensioned, and dismissed the service; and the last time I had a week's fishing at Amalrie, I spent my evenings and nights under his roof. He is now, like myself, a grandfather; and Helen, though not quite so young as she was some thirty or forty years ago, is still in my mind a perfect beauty, and has blessed her husband, during a pretty long life, with all that kind husbands can expect or obtain by marriage. She has made him a happy father, and a fond, foolish, indulgent grandpapa.

DURA DEN; OR, SECOND THOUGHTS ARE BEST.

I took my way, a few days ago, fishing-rod in hand, from Cupar in Fife, by Dura Den, up towards the healthy and sequestered village of Ceres. Dura Den was once romantic and secluded. Its brawling stream, which empties the waters of the upper basin into the Eden, leaped and tumbled over igneous, and penetrated its way through aqueous, formations, till it mingled into rejoicing union with the lovely Eden immediately under the old towers of Spottiswood, and the fine Gothic church of Dairsie. This deep

and beautifully-winding ravine was covered from rock to rock, on each successively sunny side, by trees of various name and leaf, from the scented sloe and hawthorn, up to the hazel, the birch, and the oak. It was a perfect aviary during the spring months. A few wild deer browsed amidst recesses, and various love-smitten maids and men repaired to this retreat, to talk of many things which were only interesting to themselves. The soft projecting sandstone rocks had been water-run into caves and recesses; and in some of these report had fixed the residence, for a night at least, of the famous Balfour of Burley, after the affair of Magus Muir.* It is not, however, to this, but to a more recent occurrence, that I am now about to solicit your attention, after, however, premising the change which has now been wrought upon this once rural, secluded, romantic, lovely spot. At the very entrance, there stands a bone-mill, grinding, with grating activity and horrible crunch, into powder the mingled bones of man and beast. You have scarcely escaped from the horrible jarring sound of the modern ogre, than you come full plump upon a spinning-mill, with as many windows as there are days in the year. There it stands bestriding the valley like a colossus, and commanding all the collected energies of the once pure and solitary stream. Bless me! how it thunders: the very rocks seem to shake under the whirl of the tremendous machinery; whilst at every open window out flies in clouds the imprisoned dust and stour. A single door opens, and the sound maddens on your ear into a screwing torture. It shuts again. You are greatly relieved by the compressed and imprisoned horror. A little further up this once delightful den, a pillar of smoke shoots out on the eye, like an eruption of Mount Vesuvius. This is an evidence that (as in the formation of this globe) fire has been called upon to

* A sword has lately been discovered in one of the caves, rusted and broken—probably once the sword of Burley!—19th Oct., 1839.

assist water. Again and again, another and another hulking dirty erection fixes its hideous trail in the lovely localities, till the landscape still onwards opens upon green fields, all covered and whitened over, *not* with daisies, but with *yarn*, which has just been removed from the vitriolic vat. I had essayed here and there to fish, but had not even a nibble. A little factory urchin, who saw my mistake, immediately accosted me with—

“Ye needna fish here about, sir, for the fish are a’ dead.”

“What has *deaded* them?” said I.

“Oh! I dinna ken, except maybe it’s the vitriol—they dinna tak wi’ the vitriol ava.”

“No wonder,” thought I. “I suspect neither you nor I would tak weel with such a beverage.” So I at once rolled in my line, put up my rod, and was on the eve of returning, somewhat disappointed, from my forenoon’s ramble, when my attention was attracted by an old, though fresh-looking man *in his* “*cruda viridisque senectus*,” who was sitting on a bench in the sunshine, betwixt the door and the window of one of those very neat and cleanly cottages, which have been erected for the convenience and accommodation of the mill-spinners, and which, from the name of the spirited proprietor, has been called “Yoolfield.”

“James,” said the old man—“come here, James, and tell me what’s that ye waur saying to the gentleman.”

“Ou, I was only telling him there waur nae trouts, except *stane anes*,* here.”

In the meantime, I had approached the old man’s seat, and thinking that he motioned me to be seated, I at once took my place, as if I had been an old acquaintance, by his side. It turned out that he was the grandfather of this urchin, who in a few minutes reappeared with a face of

* *Vide* recent discoveries of extinct species of fish found in this den. “Fife Illustrated.” Glasgow: James Swan.

great comfort and vigorous health; "*causa erat in aperto*"—he had dined.

"Ye'll be a stranger hereabouts, I mak nae doubt?" said the old man.

I replied that I had been so for some time past; that I had stopped, on my way north, a day in Cupar, in order to revisit this romantic retreat; but that it was now sadly changed, and I had not the heart to pursue my walk any further. I miss, added I, everything which I expected to see: the solitude, the green banks, the trees, the pure waters, the yellow trouts, the all of innocence and nature by which this den was marked, ere these vile spinning-jennies had entered, with noise, confusion, and defilement in their train.

"And so," said the aged Nestor, "ye are up in arms against the late erections, because ye canna get an hour or twa's fishing, nor pursue your own fancies about solitude, and innocence, and that! I will tell ye, my good sir—for ye're but a hairn in comparison wi' me—that had ye experienced what I hae experienced, ye wad hae blessed the day which converted this solitary and useless den into a source of comfortable living to hundreds of families, who might otherwise be starving at home, or banished from all that they hold dear into a foreign land."

"Grandfather," hereupon said a fine rosy girl about fourteen, "dinner's ready: will ye come in, or will I bring it out to you?"

"I think," said the ancient patriarch, "I'll just rest whar I am; it's a bonny sunny day, and the den is a' loun and sheltered. Just bring out the broth and the wee bit Irish stew here, and maybe this gentleman, now tired wi' nae fishing, will no scorn to tak a spoonfu' and a bit alangside o' a puir auld body."

I immediately assured my kind host that I had provisions in my basket, which I soon disengaged, together with

a flask containing a sufficiency of old Nantz. To it, therefore, we set, exchanging viands: I partaking of the excellent and savoury stew, and he of a wee drap, only a very wee drap, of the brandy. Like Sir Walter Scott's minstrel, the soul of the old yet vigorous Trojan waxed strong within him; and, after having duly returned thanks to the Giver of all good, he drew me close to his elbow, and proceeded thus:—

“Indeed, sir, I'm now considerably upwards of eighty years—the period at which the psalmist says the strength of man is but grief and labour; but I haena found it sae, for a' my griefs and labours were confined to the earlier pairt o' my life, and no to the latter day—His name be praised for the same.”

I instinctively answered “Amen;” and, partly encouraged by this, and partly by an additional pull at the brandy-flask, the old man pursued his egotism.

“Well, ye see, ye are against spinning-jennies and large manufactures, ye say; but they are the freends o' the puir, sir—the blessed supporters o' thousands and millions in these lands.* You shall hear; for, as you seem to have time on your hands, I will, for your father's sake” (I had made him acquainted with my descent from a worthy clergyman in the north), “unfold to you my whole history, and that of my children, up to this hour:—

“My name, sir, is Donald Sutherland. I belong originally to the county of that name; and I was bred a farmer on the estates of the Duchess of Sutherland. But there was neither duke nor duchess then, oh dear!” (Hereupon the old man absolutely cried; having, however, checked himself by observing that he was an old fool, he again proceeded):—“I had, as I said, a small sheep-farm, of about one thousand acres, in the western district of that county. I see, sir, you

* Very different this deliverance from that of Mrs Trollope in her “Factory Boy.”

are surprised at my saying *small*; but, sir, when land is let at a shilling an acre, as it was in my day, such a farm is but small—a thousand shillings, ye ken, is just fifty pounds o' yearly rent: and that was my rent at *Edderachills*, near by Loch Assynt. I am now, as ye see, an auld man, and a grey; but I was ance young, and stout, and foolish too, nae doobt. I thought naething wad war me, sae I just married whan I was a young, inexperienced callan, about nineteen; and, having got a brother of my puir father's to be security (ye see my puir father was only a hind on the estate o' Sutherland, and had neither money nor credit), I took my dear Helen M'Roy home to no that ill a bigging—wi' a hantle o' blankets, a peat-fire, a herd callan, and twa as canny and sensible dogs as ever followed a herd, or turned a hirsle. Aweel, ye ken, Helen and me war very happy, for we loved each other dearly; we had been acquainted frae the time we could climb a brace or eat a cranberry; and things went on no that ill ava. We had twa bairns in the course o' twal years, a lassie, and a fine lad, wha was drowned, as ye shall hear; but oh my heart is sair whan I think o't. It was one awful night in the month of January. A vessel had stranded in Loch Assynt. The men were seen, through a stormy moonshine, hanging to the topmast, which, however, went from side to side, with a fearful swing. At every turn or jerk, another and another human being was plunged into the roaring foam. My son Archibald, my shepherd, and I, pushed from the shore in a fishing-boat, which was lying high and dry—we heard the fearful screams of perishing men—we rowed off at all hazards, but had not neared the vessel, when our boat fairly swamped. We were still, however, within wading depth, and with difficulty regained our feet and the boat. We again pushed hard from land, and at last came under the lee of the wreck. My son was young, active, and daring; and, in order to ascertain how matters were, or what remained of the deck, he caught a rope, and leaped on board.

In an instant, a young man, a passenger, with his wife and child, were slung, as it were, miraculously on board our little boat. The waves went up in spouting foam betwixt the wreck and the boat, and then subsiding, heaved us with a tremendous crash against the side of the vessel; and I remember no more till I awoke to misery, in a kelp hut by the sea-shore. I found that my son, with the woman and child, had perished; but that the husband, my shepherd, and myself, had been cast ashore, and with difficulty resuscitated. My grief and his mother's grief were loud and severe. But 'what cannot be cured must be endured.' The stranger was a native of Fife, who had been to America on a mercantile speculation, and having married at New York, and become a father, was on his way towards Kirkcaldy, his native place, when this dreadful accident occurred. He had lost all his effects, and some money in the wreck, and was content to take part of my humble dwelling for a season. In the meantime, my lease expired, and another proprietor had arisen, who knew not Donald Sutherland. The rent offered by my next and more wealthy neighbour was far above what I would think of promising, so I behoved to leave sweet Edderachills, with all its heath, and moss, and muir, for a sea-shore appointment in the manufacturing of kelp from sea-weed—at that time a very flourishing employment in the West Highlands in particular. The stranger about this time took his departure, but not without many promises of returning again to visit the grave of his wife and child, and to renew his acquaintance with my wife, my daughter, and myself. For a time the kelp concern did pretty well; we had good and regular payment for the article, and an increasing demand; and we contrived to live at least as comfortably as we had done as sheep-farmers. But man is always finding out inventions; a method was devised of dispensing, by means of a chemical discovery, with our kelp entirely; and we were suddenly and entirely ruined.

It was at this period that I, in a manner, *cursed*, like you, the spirit of discovery and invention. I was disgusted by the change which the progress of science had made, and I did not know how to turn myself for a bare subsistence. In this situation of affairs, my daughter Nelly within there (pointing to the door) was courted by a neighbouring sheep-farmer's son, of a somewhat disreputable character, but of considerable reputed wealth. This was a sad trial to us all; for, though the marriage might have benefited us somewhat, in a worldly point of view, we did not like to see our blooming and virtuous child sacrificed, it might be, to the momentary feelings of a known deceiver. Nelly could not bear the thoughts of such a union; and one night she told her lover as much. In consequence of this unfortunate affair, we were very soon after turned out of house and hold—the old farmer having contracted with the proprietor for the huts and steadings which had once been peopled with busy and prosperous hands, but which now were nearly empty. Baser proposals than before were made by the degraded and vindictive young man; and we set off, one moonlight night, across the hills, for the town of Dornoch. We were three wanderers in the wilderness—my wife Helen, my daughter Nelly, and myself. I was still comparatively strong, and was determined to work, but could find no employment. For days we slept (for the weather was fine) on the heath, and lived on what little of our means yet remained. I was resolved, come what might, that I would not beg. My wife and daughter bore up amazingly; for we trusted that our God—the God of the hills, as well as of the valleys; of the poor and the outcast, as well as of the rich and provided—would not forget us. I found temporary work, at last, in a stone quarry, and occupied a hut close upon the sea-shore. This, to us all, was luxury; for it was independence. Contentment *kitchened* labour, and we slept soundly in our poverty and innocence. But this, I saw, could not long

continue; my strength was not equal to this severe labour, to which I was unaccustomed; so I persuaded, not without difficulty, my wife and daughter to accompany me to Canada, to which the Countess of Sutherland was then offering a free passage from Cromarty Frith, in the good ship *Aurora*. I should, however, have mentioned that, whilst residing at Dornoch, I had observed the son of a neighbouring proprietor—a somewhat smart-looking gentleman—frequently passing our door, and sometimes conversing with my wife and daughter; but I took no notice of the affair, as I felt secure in the virtue and prudence of both parties. No proposals, honourable or otherwise, were made to my daughter, and I conceived the matter to be at an end. On the day of the ship's sailing, we were all on the quay, and ready to embark. My wife and I had entered the boat, and were waiting for my daughter, who had been sent by us on a message to a shop. She did not return in time for the boat in which we were conveyed to the *Aurora*; but we were told by the sailors that she would probably arrive in the next. One boat, however, arrived, but our dear Nelly was not in it; another came, but with it no daughter. Meantime the ship was under sail, and the captain said he would not lose the favourable breeze for all the girls in Scotland. My dear wife was inconsolable, and I petitioned hard to be let out, even on one of the Western Isles; but the weather was exceeding stormy, and we kept as far as possible from land. 'God,' said I to my grieving partner, 'will protect Nelly; for she is good and virtuous. God can be father and mother, and more than all that, to those who fear and obey him.' We landed at Quebec, and maintained ourselves for some time—I acting as a kind of shore-porter, and my wife assisting in assorting furs in a great warehouse. But our means were but small; so we bethought us of removing more inland. So we arrived ultimately at Montreal, where I had the good fortune to

meet with a distant relative in pretty good circumstances. He had long been engaged in a mercantile house, and had now obtained a considerable and a profitable share in it. He immediately found employment for me as a warehouse servant, whilst my wife washed and dressed for himself and a few friends. Year after year passed by, and many a letter did we write to Edderachills and Dornoch; but we received no answer. At last it pleased God to remove my dear Helen by death; and my friend having resolved to remove to Kirkcaldy, his native place, I took shipping with him in the ship *St John*, and we arrived off the Land's End in safety. But it came on to blow dreadfully from the north and the east, as we rounded the island; and one dark night in the month of November we struck upon a rock in the neighbourhood of Ely. The ship fired signals of distress, and a boat came out, which saved the passengers and crew; but the ship and cargo were lost. What was my surprise, upon arriving at the inn, to find, in the person of one of the boatmen, the shipwrecked stranger, Sam Rogers, who had lodged so long with us at Edderachills. He insisted upon my immediately repairing to his cabin, as he termed it, on the shore, with the view of introducing me to his wife and a large family of children.

“‘Have you ever heard,’ continued he, after we were seated, ‘anything of your daughter Nelly?’

“‘Not a word,’ said I, eagerly. ‘Have you?’

“‘Would you know her,’ continued he, ‘if you were again to see her?’

“‘Know her,’ said I; ‘to be sure I would—her image is ever before me. I see her, at this moment, as plainly as if she were still alive. Oh! what—horrible!—stand off!—stand off! Do these old eyes deceive me, or art thou indeed my own darling, lost child?’ said I; whilst Nelly—the real flesh-and-blood Nelly—clasped me to her arms, and burst into a flood of tears.

“‘My father!—my father!’ she exclaimed, whilst the young ones gathered around us in stupid amazement; and my son-in-law, Sam Rogers, rubbed his hands and flapped his arms in perfect delight. It was indeed my dear Nelly, in the person of Helen Rogers, the still handsome mother of seven children.

“But, Helen, I say—Helen, set down the bairn a wee bit, and tell this honest gentleman the Dornoch story, ye ken.”

“Hout,” said Helen, “I hae nae time, father, to enter into a’ the outs and ins o’ thae langsyne tales; besides, I see Sam waving me up to the mill—I’m wanted, father, an’ ye maun look after the bairn till I come back again.”

Being foiled in his wish to set his daughter’s tongue agoing to the tune of her own adventures, the old man placed the child on the greensward in front of the cottage, and, after once more paying his respects to my brandy-flask, proceeded as follows:—

“Weel, the lassie disna like to hear me tell the story; I ken she aye blushes at bits o’t; but now that she’s awa, I may just as weel finish, by letting ye know that the scamp wha had seen, and fallen in love, as he called it, with her at Dornoch, had watched her down to the beach, and having hired some accomplice in the person of one of the sailors, had her misdirected in the first place, and lifted off her feet in the second, and placed beside the well-known gentleman in a post-chaise, which drove off immediately in an inland direction. In vain were all her struggles and entreaties. The young blackguard immediately proceeded to inform her that her struggles and her shouts were of no avail; that he could not promise her marriage, as he was already engaged, to please his mother; but he would give her love in abundance, and a cottage residence, which he had provided for her on his father’s property, at no great distance. It was in vain for her to resist; but she had resolved rather to die than to yield to his wishes; so, when they had arrived at the centre

of an extensive plantation, he caused her to alight, and dismissing, as it was now nearly dark, the chaise and driver, proceeded to conduct her, as he said, on foot to the cottage which he had provided. He half dragged her a few paces from the road, or rather track through the wood, and, unveiling all at once the fiend within him, proceeded to open and undisguised violence. But, sir," said the old man, with emphasis, "he thought himself alone, but he was not alone—God saw him, and had marked his proceedings; and God sent a deliverer, in the person of him owre by yonder" (pointing to the mills). "God sent Sam Rogers, with a guid oak plank, to free the captive, and make the captor flee for his life: in short, sir—for I fear I have tired ye wi' my lang-winded story—Sam, by the mercy of God, had just landed at Dornoch as we sailed from it; and being on his way to Edderachills, for the very purpose of asking my Nelly in marriage, he had pushed on, meaning to travel all night across the country, when the providential occurrence took place. Weel, we went now to Ely, where we remained for a time—old grandy, that is, myself, my son, and his family; but times became tight there, and the family kept still increasing; so at last we got acquainted with the worthy gentleman, Mr Yool, to whom all these great works and these neat cottages belong, and he brought us up here, and set us down comfortably, where not only my son-in-law, but every wean, male and female, above seven years of age, can earn its own clothes and subsistence. We are now, sir, in comparative affluence; and all this, sir, is owing to these improvements in machinery and in chemistry, which at one time drove me from my native land. 'SECOND THOUGHTS, THEY SAY, ARE BEST;' at least so it has been with me, as I sit here in my old age, in comparative ease and comfort, and see my grandchildren growing up in domestic affection and public usefulness around me. Here is no scattering of the young family—one going east, and one west, never to meet

again; but here, every night, all congregate around *one hearth*, whilst a psalm is sung, a chapter is read, and a prayer said by grandy himself!"

I shall never regret the loss of my old and favourite amusement, whilst I can recollect this old man's narrative, and the many happy and comfortable homes which now occupy the once solitary holms of *Dura Den*.

THE LAIRD OF LUCKY'S HOW

HAVE any of our readers ever been at the Hague? It doesn't much signify whether they have or not. They know that it is one of the most beautiful towns in the Netherlands, and that it is not a little famous in ancient story; and their knowing this is quite enough for our present purpose. If, however, they knew the town a little more intimately, they would know that one of its principal and most ancient streets is called the Hoogstraat; and that here, once on a time, stood the principal inn or hostelry of the town. It was an oldfashioned house, with a great variety of projecting and excrescent structures, of all sorts and sizes, stuck to it, to increase its internal accommodation, and to puzzle the curious inquirer—at least this seemed a part of the design—who, while taking an outside view, wondered what they could all be intended for.

Notwithstanding, however, the somewhat uncouth and perplexing appearance of the exterior of the Drouthsloken—which was the name of the ancient hostel in question—it was a sufficiently handsome and comfortable house within. Its kitchen, in particular, was a sight; it was so clean, so bright, and so cheerful: shining all round with pewter trenchers and brass utensils of various descriptions, all as lustrous as whiting and hard rubbing could make them. The place was a treat to look at; and no less a treat to look at was its jolly landlord, Thonder Vander Tromp. From stem to stern, Thonder was of the regular Dutch build; which, without descending to particulars, we may say consists, as our readers know, in exhibiting an amplitude of material at all points of the person. In this respect, our

good friend Thonder might be considered a *chef d'œuvre*; for he was of the most magnificent dimensions, especially latitudinally. In longitude, indeed, he might be considered as a little deficient. He was of no great height; but his girth was superb, and told a tale of good living, with an unction which no language could approach. In this tale the ruddy, jovial countenance of mine host of the Drouthsloken cordially joined; and supported by its hilarious testimony the facts therein set forth.

Having thus shortly described both mine host and his hostel, we proceed to say that, on a certain evening in the middle of the winter of 1651, a stranger, carrying a small bundle under his arm, walked, or rather stalked—for there was something uncouth in his gait—into the passage of the Drouthsloken. He was wrapped up in a Scottish plaid, and wore on his head the well-known flat blue bonnet of the Scottish Lowlands. In person, he was tall and spare, with the grave and serious cast of countenance so characteristic of that people whose national dress he wore. Unpolished, however, as the exterior of this person bespoke him to be, there was yet, in his light grey eye, a mingled expression of determination and intelligence, that never failed to secure the respect which his manner and first appearance might well have forfeited. His age seemed about forty or forty-five.

Finding no one to whom he might address himself in the passage of the inn, the stranger held on his way to its further extremity—no trifling distance; towards which he was attracted by sounds of laughter and merriment, issuing from the kitchen of the Drouthsloken, which was situated at the farther end of the passage by which the house was intersected, and the same with that which he was now traversing.

The sounds of merriment by which the stranger had been attracted proceeded from a group of young men, who,

standing in the form of a semicircle in front of the jolly landlord of the house—who, again, stood with his back to the fire, wielding a huge black bottle in his hand—were indulging in uproarious laughter at the witty sayings which he, the latter, seemed throwing amongst them like so many squibs and crackers.

At the moment that our friend of the plaid and bonnet entered the kitchen of the Drouthsloken, our jovial host was standing, as we have said, with his back to the fire—a roaring one, by the way—and looking the very personification of all that's joyous, and comfortable, and care-dispelling. A bright and broad red waistcoat covered his portly front; but buttoned so short a way up as to expose a dazzling display of snow-white linen beneath. Across this brilliant garment there lay also the folds of a pure white apron, tucked up with business-like smartness. Dark velvet small-clothes, with well-polished shoes, on which shone a pair of massive silver buckles, completed the outer man of Thonder Vander Tromp.

Amongst the merry group of which Tromp was one, something like a sensation was created by the entrance of the stranger. The career of badinage was instantly arrested, and the eyes of the whole party turned towards him. Undismayed by the general attention he had excited, the stranger coolly deposited his bundle on a side-table, and, approaching at once the fire, and the group by which it was surrounded, delivered himself, as he did so, of the very simple and homely remark—

“There's a wat nicht, gentlemen.”

Now, the stranger, although he had thus expressed himself, had not ventured to hope that his language would be understood. He had spoken mechanically as it were, and delivered himself in his usual way, simply because he could do no otherwise, and because he thought it necessary to say something. Great, therefore, was his surprise, and, we may

add, his joy also, when one of the young men of the party, of singularly graceful manners and bearing, acknowledged his greeting in excellent English, and with great politeness and civility of speech.

Delighted at having met with a native of Great Britain, which he could not doubt the young man who had addressed him was—

“Feth, but I am richt glad, sir,” said the stranger—“excuse my freedom—at having met wi’ a countryman, as I tak ye to be, sir—in this outlandish place. It’s mair than I expeckit, I’m sure. I had nae thochts o’ meetin wi’ ony but ane.”

“And pray who was that one, my good friend?” said the young man, throwing, at the same time, a rapid look of intelligence around on his companions, who seemed at once to comprehend its meaning. “Who was that one, my good friend,” he said, “if I may ask, without subjecting myself to a charge of impertinence?”

“Ou, nae impertinence at a’, sir; only ye’ll excuse me keepin my thoom on the mater ye inquire aboot till I ken better wha’s speerin. Excuse me, sir, excuse me, for this plainness,” continued the stranger, smiling; “but I hae come frae a country whar a slip o’ the tongue, in thae times, nicht cost a man his head; and that maks folks wary, ye ken.”

“Faith, and good reason it should, friend,” replied the young man, laughingly. “Thou hast well accounted for thy caution. But recollect thou art now in a different country, mine honest friend, and hast no need to be so guarded in thy speech.”

“Feth, sir, I dinna ken. That may be; but, if ye had fan the ticklin o’ a tow aboot yer craig, as I hae dune, ye wadna forget it in a hurry, nor the lesson it taught ye to keep yer tongue atween yer teeth.”

“Well, no doubt; that certainly is rough schooling,” said

the young cavalier; "but I repeat again, that thou art now in a different country, friend; and one where thou hast nothing to fear from a reasonable use of thy tongue."

"Aweel, it may be sae, sir," replied the imperturbable stranger; "but I ken o' nae country whar a calm sough's no guid counsel."

"Ha! ha! ha! right, friend, right," roared mine jolly host of the Drouthsloken, with open mouth and noisy laugh. "It is not goot to say too moosh anywhere; no more in the Hague as any oder place. But here is all honourable gentlemen," he added, casting a furtive glance of good-humoured meaning at the young man who had first addressed the Scotch visiter, "who will not make bad use of what you shall say."

"Ou, I hae nae doot o' that at a', sir," replied the latter; "but, to be plain wi' ye, it's no my intention to say onything that onybody can mak ony use o', either guid, bad, or indifferent." And, having said this, the speaker showed a very palpable desire to put an end to the conference, which he evidently began to think was studiously directed by the other party towards an elucidation of his purposes in visiting the Hague. In this disposition, however, he was by no means joined by the party in whose presence he was, particularly by the young man by whom he had been first addressed, who evinced a gratification in the peculiar humour of the stranger, and an interest in him altogether that would not permit of his being shaken off. So far indeed, was he from permitting this, that he insisted on the latter's joining him in a bottle of wine, which he instantly ordered mine jolly host of the Drouthsloken to produce.

On the return of the latter, bearing a bottle of wine in one hand and a screw in the other—

"Will your—your——" he said, but was here interrupted by a wink from the person he addressed, which had the evident effect of making him substitute a different word for

that which he had intended to use, and he added "your honour." "Will your honour not go up-stairs to your own favourite apartment, de leetle blue parlour?"

"No, no, Mynheer Tromp," replied the young cavalier, "we'll just stay where we are. The night is cold, and I have always thought your kitchen the most comfortable and cheerful apartment in your house. So place us a table here, close by the fire, if you please."

Mynheer Vander Tromp bowed a humble assent; and, in an instant after, a small round table of walnut-tree, shining like a mirror, was placed in the desired situation. Bottles and glasses covered it in a twinkling, and in a twinkling also was the party seated around it, including our friend of the bonnet and plaid. This worthy person at first shied the good fellowship thus thrust upon him; but, gradually warming with the wine he drank—for bottle succeeded bottle with marvellous celerity—he became by degrees less and less reserved in his manner, until at length his natural caution giving way altogether before the increasing pressure of the vinous influence, he became as communicative as he had before been the reverse.

Availing himself of the altered disposition of the stranger, the young cavalier, whom we have represented as having more especially attached himself to the former, again endeavoured to extract from him the purpose of his visit to the Hague; and his attempt was now successful.

"Aweel, I'll just tell ye Gude's truth, gentlemen," he said, in answer to a question, or rather hint, on the subject of explanation which had just been addressed to him by his young friend; and for the reply to which all waited—"I'll just tell ye Gude's truth, as I think ye're a' honourable men, and wadna willingly bring a man into trouble, wha hasgien ye nae cause o' offence. Ye see, then freends, I hae just arrived frae Scotland, and hae come here to see our unfortunate young king, Charles the Second that should be, whase

unhappy story ye dootless a' ken. I hae been ruined oot o' hoose and ha' for the part I took in his puir faither's behalf, and hae been obliged to flee my ain country, besides, for the same reason ; and hae noo come here, to see if His Majesty, God bless him, could afford me ony sort o' protection till the storm that's noo tearin a' up by the roots in Scotland blaws by ; and that's just the hail affair, gentlemen."

Long ere the stranger had concluded this account of the purpose of his visit to the Hague, a look of intelligence, which originated with his young friend, had passed amongst his auditors, and, in the case of the former, was associated with a peculiar expression of sympathy. Both, however, the look alluded to, and the latter symptom of a yet deeper feeling, was unobserved by the person whose communication had given rise to them. Becoming now querist in turn, he asked, "if ony o' the gentlemen could tell him whar the king leaved, and if they could put him on a way o' gettin introduced to him?"

"Thou couldst not have lighted more luckily for that, my friend," said the young man to whom we have already so often alluded, "than thou hast done in coming amongst us ; for it happens that I hold a confidential place near the person of Charles, and will have much pleasure in exerting my influence in procuring you the introduction you desire."

"Many thanks to ye, freend," replied the martyr to royalty—"many thanks to ye, if ye mean, by Charles, His Majesty the King o' England—God bless him !"

"I certainly do, my friend. I mean him and no other."

"Weel, sir—excuse my freedom—if ye do, I think ye might ca' him sae. Wha can dispute his title, although his back be at the wa' ?"

"Oh ! no one—no one, my good friend, I believe—that is, lawfully," replied the young cavalier, laughingly ; "but, seeing his present circumstances—a wandering exile in a foreign land, crownless and coinless—we, somehow or other,

cannot get our tongues about those sounding titles that are his birthright. We prefer calling him simply Charles, or English Charles; and I rather think he prefers it himself. His titles he thinks best left in abeyance in the meantime."

"Aweel, if it be his ain pleasure, I hae nae mair to say. Perhaps it's as prudent and becomin; for, as ye say, sir, a king that has neither a croon on his head nor in his pouch is in but a sair condition for his dignity. That maun be allowed."

There was not much in this remark itself to excite merriment; but there was certainly something in the naïve manner in which it was delivered that was calculated to produce this effect; and it did. A shout of laughter, in which the speaker's young friend was the loudest and heartiest performer, acknowledged the peculiarity to which we have alluded. On the laugh subsiding, the latter again addressed the former, saying—

"But, friend, you have not yet told us by what name we should address you."

"As to that," replied the stranger, smilingly, "I believe the maist appropriate name or title ye could gie me at the present moment wad be that o' the Launless Laird. But it wasna aye sae. I had a bit guid property in the Loudans, ca'ed Lucky's How, every clod o't my ain, wi' a yearly rental o' forty merks, guid siller, forby the thirlage o' the Mill o' Meldrum, that was worth a guid twa or three merks mair. But a's gane awa like a handfu o' ingan peelins on a windy day; that cursed battle o' Worcester settled a', and left me withoot a groat, and withoot as much grund as wad mak the hillock o' a moudiwart. But it's a' gane in a guid cause; I dinna begrudge't; and, besides, things 'll maybe come roond again; and, if they dinna, there's nae help for't."

"So you were at the battle of Worcester, laird?" said the speaker's young friend.

"Feth! that I was, sir; and there," he added, holding out his right hand, which was minus the forefinger and thumb—"there's a certificate o' the truth o' my statement, gien under the hand o' ane o' Crum'll's praying dragoons. It was an ugly lick; but there were a hantle o' uglier anes than it gatn whar it was gotten. It was a coorse business at thegither."

"It was no less, my good friend," said the young cavalier. "I was there, too."

"Was ye, feth?" replied the laird. "Then, if ye was, sir, ye saw a bonny stramash—mair than ye'll forget in a hurry, I daursay. It was an awfu scene yon, when the dragoons cam in upon us in the streets o' Worcester. 'Od! they sliced and slapped about them as if they had gotten into a plantation o' lang kale, and no amang Christian men like themsels."

"It was indeed a sad business," replied the young man, with a melancholy smile. "Saw ye the king on that day?"

"I did," replied the laird.

"Wouldst know him again?"

"No; I canna think I wad. I just got a glisk o' him, for the first and last time, in the middle o' the dirdum at Worcester. When I saw him, the puir lad was fechtin like a Turk; but it was a' to nae purpose. He was obleeged to rin for't at last, and to perk himsel up in a tree, like a hoolet, to keep oot o' the way o' Crum'll's sodgers. If they had gotten the puir lad—as it was a God's mercy they didna—they wad hae taen aff his head, nae doot, as they did his unfortunate faither's; and then, as, indeed, it's said they proposed to do, made a buttonmaker o' his sister, and maybe a Spitalfields weaver o' his brither, the Duke o' Gloucester."

"I *have* heard," replied the young cavalier, with a contemptuous smile, while a blush of deep feeling, it might be indignation, overspread his intelligent countenance—"I

have heard that some such idea was actually entertained by the Parliament as that thou hast alluded to."

"There's nae doot that such a report was current, sir; but whether true or no, I winna tak upon me to say. They may hae been belied in't."

"I hope they may," replied the young cavalier, musingly. Then, suddenly recovering himself, and assuming his usual cheerfulness of manner—"And what are the king's friends about in Scotland?" he said, slapping the laird good-humouredly on the knee.

"Dooms little, sir," replied the laird. "They daurna cheep. Monk has gotten his heel fairly on their necks; so that deil a ane o' them can wag either tongue or finger. There's a wheen o' them taen to the hills wi' Glencairn and Balcarras; but what can they do? Naething. It's a puir thing to be in that way, sir. I had a trial o' that mysel. Tak my word for't, that sleepin in a moss hag, or in the lee o' a whin-bush, and leevin upon lavrocks, or raw turnips and bog-water, is nae better than it's ca'ed."

"Well, well, laird, I hope times will mend with our poor friends in Scotland," replied the young cavalier, to whom this picture of the sufferings of the royalists, notwithstanding the strong tincture it exhibited of the speaker's natural humour, seemed to give much pain. "I hope times will mend with them yet, and that feasting and feather-beds will make them forget the raw turnips and whin-bushes ye speak of. In the meantime, my good friend, push round the bottle, and let us talk of other matters; for these make me sad."

Nothing loth, the Laird of Lucky's How filled up a brimming bumper, and, drinking "better times," sent it down after some two or three dozen that had preceded it.

The party were now getting into high glee. The laugh, the joke, and the bottle went merrily round, and the merriest, and apparently the most jovial of the company, was

the young gentleman whom we have hitherto represented as expressly attaching himself to the laird, and whose name, as the latter learned from himself, was Jones. This roysterer was the life and soul of the company, when roystering became the order of the evening; but his mirth was tempered with a gentleness of demeanour, and an air of polished hilarity, if such a phrase may be permitted, as inspired the idea of the presence of a perfect gentleman. His whole manner, in short, was exceedingly captivating. His fancy was ready and playful; his wit brilliant and appropriate; and the affability and winning character of his smile irresistible. Altogether, he was a most delightful companion, and admirably calculated to figure in such circumstances as those in which he was now placed. How he might acquit himself in a scene of a more grave and serious character, it would not perhaps have been easy to guess.

The mirth of the party in the kitchen of the Drouth-sloken had just attained its height, when a circumstance occurred which did not affect its humour, but somewhat changed its character. This was the entrance of two of the landlord's daughters. Dressed in the neat and simple, although somewhat peculiar, costume of their country, with their hair tightly braided up, and bound with a broad silver frontlet, so as to exhibit in bold relief the contour of their full and fair countenances, two prettier girls than Juliana and Joan Vander Tromp were not within the walls of the Hague.

As they entered the kitchen, to which they had come merely, or, perhaps, we should have said ostensibly, to look after some household affairs, the girls curtsied slightly but gracefully to the company by which it was occupied, and, smiling pleasantly and good-naturedly the while, passed on to the upper end of the apartment, and began to occupy themselves in some little domestic duties. They had not, however, been permitted to enter unnoticed. On their ap-

pearance, the whole party got up from their seats, and acknowledged their presence by a gallant greeting; and in this courtesy, Mr Jones again shone pre-eminent by the greater grace and deeper devotion he displayed in his chivalrous welcome to the fair visitors.

It might have been observed, too, that to him, in turn, were the curtsies and the looks also of the young ladies most especially directed; but in this case these were associated with a degree of respect for which it would not have been easy to account.

"What think ye of our fair Netherlanders, laird?" said Mr Jones to the latter, in a half whisper, when the ladies' attention was, or seemed to be, engrossed by their occupation. "Will they not match your Scotch lasses, think you?"

"That's a pair o' braw queans, I maun allow," replied the laird. "Just twa as bonny bits o' lassocks as ane wad wish to see; but I think they want the complexion—they hacna the blume o' our kilted heather trampers. They want the caller red that the norland breeze puts on the cheeks o' our Scottish gilpies. That's my humble opinion, sir. But they're twa bonny lassocks, for a' that. Nae doot o't."

"On the score of complexion I grant ye, laird, they are, perhaps, deficient a little, but I think this amply compensated by the intellectual expression, the fine contour, and the softer and more intense lustre of the eye. I have seen your Scottish maidens, laird, and admired them in my time."

"Feth, sir, I maun say your taste wad hae been very questionable if ye hadna," interposed the laird. "When and whar saw ye them, if ye please, sir? What pairt o' Scotland was ye in?" he added.

The question appeared to place Jones in a difficulty for a moment; but he at length answered—

"Why, laird, I have been in many parts of Scotland in my day. I was with the king at Scone."

"Was that at the time o' his coronation?" inquired the laird.

"It was," said Jones.

"And it wad be there, like, and aboot the quarter o' Perth, that ye saw our bonny Scotch lasses, I warrant," said the laird, laughingly. "Ay, if a' tales be true, the king admired them when he saw them, as muckle as ye could do, sir," continued the laird.

"Why, they do report something of that kind," replied Jones, with some confusion of manner, and slightly colouring as he spoke—indications of a feeling, whatever it was, which seemed highly edifying to his companions, who marked it with repeated bursts of laughter; "they do report something of the kind," said Jones; "but we mustn't credit all we hear, laird."

"The tae half's aboot the usual thing I believe," replied the latter; "and, if we tak that in the present case—that is, regarding the king's gallantries ——"

"Ay, ay, go on, laird, go on—that's it—give us all you know about the king's gallantries in Scotland," shouted, almost simultaneously, the other members of the party. "Go on, go on, like a good fellow."

"Nay, nay, now," exclaimed Jones, earnestly, but good-humouredly, "as one of the king's confidential servants, I must protest, laird, against your divulging anything of that kind in my presence."

"Never mind the protest—never mind the protest, laird. Go on, and we'll stand between you and the consequences," again shouted several members of the party. "What know ye about the king's gallantries at Scone?"

"Ou, it was nae great things after a', to mak a wark aboot; but, ye see, there war a wheen unco godly ministers there at the time, an' they made an awfu ado aboot it.

The hale affair was just this. The king happenin to go into the room that he usually occupied in the Palace o' Scone ae mornin earlier than ordinar, wha does he fin sortin't oot but a bit bonny lassie o' a chaumermaid. Aweel, whan she saw the king enter, wham she hadna expeckit for at least an hour after, what does she do but mak a rin oot, as it war, and what does the king do but kep her, throw his arms about her neck, and gie her a hearty kiss—a reglar royal salute? And awa gaed the lassie, skirlin like a curlew, half-mad wi' the fricht an' the honour. But what wad ye hae o't but that ane o' the Covenantin ministers, wha war then as thick as craws about Scone—it bein just like a rookery wi' the black coats for the time—suld be just at the moment stanin at a window, in anither apartment that lookit richt into the ane whar the king had kissed the bit lassie, and saw the hale affair; and what does he do but report the scandal to his brethren, wha, shocked at the indecency, appointed a committee o' ministers to reprove the royal offender! This committee accordingly waited on the king, whan their spokesman, ane Douglas—an awfu stern man—after rebookin His Majesty, added, that it wad be prudent o' him, whan he desired to amuse himsel in future, to be mair carefu in shuttin the windows."

"Capital, laird; capital!" shouted several of the party, in convulsions of laughter. "Any more—any more?"

"Nay, nay, now, laird," said Jones, laughing, and clapping his hand on the mouth of the tell-tale; "on your allegiance to your lawful sovereign, I command ye to silence. He must not, in my presence, be made a subject of mirth to these idle jesters."

"Tuts, it's but a joke, man; but if ye think it wad offend His Majesty, I'll say nae mair. I wad suner lose something considerable than do that. But what the waur can the king be o' it's bein kent that he likes the lasses? I trow it's rather a feather in his kep than a discredit till him."

"Well done, laird!" exclaimed Jones, clapping the former jocosely on the shoulder. "Thou'rt a good old soul; and I shall take care that Charles knows of thy lenity towards his failings. It will do thee no harm with him."

Having said this, Jones rose from the table, and went towards the landlord's daughters, who were still busily occupied, or apparently so, at any rate, at the further end of the apartment. His approach to these fair damsels was made in the most gallant fashion imaginable, and with all the air and manner of a thoroughbred courtier and cavalier. What conversation passed between him and the girls was not overheard by the other members of the party; but the frequent bursts of laughter which were from time to time elicited, sufficiently showed that it was of a mirthful character, and that the badinage of Jones fully supported, in point and brilliancy, the credit of his other kindred qualifications. After some time, he returned to his party, and again took his seat beside the laird; who, on his doing so, remarked—

"Feth, sir, ye seem as guid a hand at botherin the lasses as your master. It's in the family, I think."

A roar of laughter succeeded this sally, to which Jones himself was one of the largest contributors, although it was certainly mingled with some embarrassment of manner. From this embarrassment, however, he was unexpectedly relieved by the strains of a wandering minstrel, which suddenly rose from the street, just underneath the window of the kitchen of the Drouthsloken. As these strains were of no ordinary excellence, they instantly attracted the attention of all in the apartment, inclusive of the landlord's two fair daughters, one of whom in especial (Juliana) evinced, by her flurried and agitated manner, a greater interest in the presence of the minstrel than would have been warranted on the supposition that it was merely accidental. Her confusion, however, and the consciousness which it

implied of a knowledge exceeding that of those around her, passed undiscovered by all except Jones, whose more vigilant eye detected these symptoms of secret and mysterious understanding. He made no remark, however, on the subject; and carefully concealed his discovery, not only from the rest of the party, but from her who was the object of his mental speculations. Having concluded his serenade, or at least its first department, which consisted, first, of a preliminary flourish on a violin, executed with great spirit and felicity, and then of a song, accompanied by the instrument, sung in a peculiarly deep-toned, but exceedingly melodious, voice, the minstrel ceased for a few seconds, when Jones proposed that he should be invited in; and that, if he proved merely a gallant, he should be asked to a glass of wine; and if he turned out a professional performer, who came in the exercise of his vocation, he should be requested to entertain them with his music within-doors. To this proposal a general assent was at once given; and this assent was immediately followed by the proceeding proper to its fulfilment. Three or four of the party, headed by Jones, instantly rushed out, and surrounded the astonished minstrel before he was aware. At first he discovered symptoms of a desire to escape from the party; but, seeing this impossible, he stood his ground manfully, and awaited the pleasure of the gentlemen, whose notice, he said, he had the honour, it seemed, of so specially attracting. A momentary glance at the speaker satisfied Jones and his party of his quality. It was that of a professed street performer; or at least of a person of the humblest class, as was indicated by his apparel, which consisted of a short cloak, with a sort of coarse jerkin underneath, a pair of wide and ill-made knee-breeches, coarse blue woollen stockings, and a pair of enormous wooden shoes. On his head was a brown felt hat, of a conical shape, adorned with a cock's feather, and altogether resembling those seen in

paintings of Dutch boors. These outward indications, then, settled the question of the minstrel's rank, and rendered no ceremony necessary in inviting him in.

"You play well, friend," said Jones. "We have been listening to you, and will be glad if you will come and amuse us for half-an-hour or so. I will see to your being suitably recompensed."

"Thank you, honourable sirs," replied the minstrel. "I doubt not of my recompense, were it once earned; but the hour is late, and I may not tarry abroad longer. Moreover, I make it a rule never to enter any house, or to perform to any private party within-doors. I bid you a good-night, gentlemen."

"Nay, by my troth, and you do no such thing, friend," said Jones, seizing the minstrel, who was at this moment about making off, by the skirt of his jerkin. "We don't part with good company in this way. Friends," he said, addressing his companions, "lend a hand here, to secure the fiddler. We must compel him to his own interest, which he would thus wilfully neglect."

No sooner said than done. In a twinkling the reluctant minstrel was grasped on all sides, and in an instant after found himself in the centre of the kitchen of the Drouth-sloken, to which he had been carried almost bodily, in despite of a certain quantum of vain resistance and remonstrance, by which he had at first endeavoured to thwart the purpose of his captors. On being brought into the light of the kitchen, it was discovered that the captured fiddler and songster was deficient of an eye, at least of the use of it, as it was covered by a large green shade, apparently unnecessarily large, as it concealed the half of his face. Another peculiarity was now also observable, and this was, that the neck of his cloak was clasped at a most extraordinary height up on his face, and that he would by no means listen to any entreaties, either to lay aside the

said cloak, or even to unloosen the clasp by which it was secured in so strange a position. We need scarcely add, that the effect of these various dispositions of his externals was to conceal almost entirely his countenance, of which only a small portion of the left side was visible; and even this it was attempted to circumscribe as much as possible, by the disposition of the hair of the head, which was carefully combed down over the exposed space.

"Come now, friend," said Jones, addressing the musician, and handing him, at the same time, a huge brimmer of wine, "gulp this with a celerity that shall be creditable to thy craft, man, and let us have thereafter a taste of thy calling—some of thy merriest strains; for I mean to see if we cannot make a dance of it, by the help of these fair dames there"—inclining his head towards the landlord's daughters, who still kept their ground in the kitchen; although, if the matter had been inquired into, we rather fear they would have found some difficulty in naming the particular duty that detained them.

Finding it of no use to resist the spirit which he saw prevailed amongst the party, the minstrel quietly despatched the contents of the goblet that had been presented to him, and commenced the duty that had been imposed upon him. On the first sound of the preliminary flourish of his bow becoming audible, Jones went up to the buxom daughters of Mynheer Tromp, and in his most gallant manner asked them if they would have any objection to take the floor with him and his friends, seeing that they had unexpectedly made the acquisition of an admirable musician, although, he must confess, rather an odd-looking man; and Jones, as he made the latter remark, looked slyly at Juliana, to mark its effect, and found it acknowledged by a deep but transient blush, which she endeavoured to conceal.

The proposal, however, of a dance was accepted on the part of the younger sister, Joan, with eager alacrity; and

on the part of Juliana with an appearance of the same willingness, but with a confusion and hesitation of manner that gave token of a counteracting feeling. Having obtained the consent of the fair sisters to "tread a measure," the gay courtier took a hand of each, and gallantly led them to the middle of the floor; intimating, at the same time, by signal, to his friends to clear the space for the impending performances—a signal which they lost no time in obeying; two or three seizing chairs apiece; and other two or three—one of whom was the laird, who seemed to enter with great goodwill into the spirit of the thing—lifting the table, with all it carried, to a distant corner of the apartment.

Just as these preparations were completed, and while Jones stood in the middle of the floor, doing the polite to his two ladies—but directing his attentions most especially to the elder—their father, the jolly Vander Tromp, who had been absent for a considerable time, entered the apartment, when, perceiving what was going on—

"Ah, very goot, very goot!" he said, in his most hilarious manner—his jolly, broad red face beaming with delight. "A daunce, a daunce—ah, very goot thing a daunce"—and he cracked his finger and thumb, and threw up one of his huge legs in the air, with an expression of highly-excited feeling. Then, calming down a moment—"You will have no objection, Mynheer Jones, to my frow have share in the daunce?"

"Objection, Tromp!" ejaculated Jones, with well-feigned horror at the supposition. "By no means. I shall be but too proud of the honour."

"An tank you, Mynheer Jones—you are too goot." And saying this, Vander Tromp disappeared, with another joyous flourish of finger and thumb and left leg, in search of Mrs Tromp, to conduct her into the presence of the dancers, and to a share of their amusement.

In the meantime, the parties were set, and the dance commenced with great vigour; Jones displaying in this exercise

a degree of skill and grace in entire keeping with the refinement of his general manner. His spirits, too, were exuberant, and infused a life into all around him, that all the other circumstances combined could not have inspired.

Although by no means wanting in attention to the younger lady, it might be observed, however, that Jones was much more assiduous in his civilities to Juliana; and, what was a yet more remarkable circumstance, it might also have been observed, that the musician evinced a strange sensation of uneasiness whenever he saw Jones paying any particular attention to this lady. He fidgeted in his seat, bungled the tune he was playing, and shot fiercer glances from his solitary optic on the revellers on the floor, but most especially on Jones and his fair favourite. What was odd, too, Jones seemed to be aware of the feeling he was exciting in the sensitive fiddler, and to delight in the uneasiness he was occasioning; for the more markedly it was evinced, the more assiduous and persevering was he in his gallantries. Although, however, all this might have been sufficiently evident to a close and vigilant observer, it escaped the notice of those present; for Jones managed his secret tactics, whatever these were, with great caution, and exhibited no other symptoms of consciousness than a slight, scarcely perceptible, smile of sly intelligence.

We have said that none present were cognisant of this mysterious understanding, or rather misunderstanding, between Jones and the musician; but we are not sure that this is quite correct. There was an air of embarrassment about the manner of the fair Juliana, that seemed to indicate that she was also in possession of some share of the secret knowledge that was working so much underhand mischief; and of this Jones appeared likewise to be aware.

Thus stood matters, then, with this trio, when Vander Tromp and his wife—the former leading the latter on his arm—came tripping into the kitchen, with the grace and

agility of a couple of elephants; for the worthy spouse of the worthy landlord of the Drouthsloken was, like himself, of the regular Dutch build, and had very much the shape and appearance of a featherbed upon legs, if such an object can be conceived. Her breadth, which was naturally of the most formidable dimensions, was greatly increased by a stiff silk gown, which projected in rigid amplitude on all sides, and gave to her whole person an appearance of illimitable expanse. Notwithstanding these vast dimensions, there was yet a comeliness about her bulk, and an expression of benevolence and good-nature in her rosy countenance, that rendered her altogether by no means an unpleasing object.

On the entrance of mine host and his larger as well as better half, Jones, with that gallant devotion which seemed natural to him, instantly advanced towards the latter, and, with a preliminary flourish of some of his most graceful obeisances, in which, perhaps, a very shrewd observer might have discovered a slight tincture of mock gallantry, invited her to join him in the next dance. The large lady, with a good-humoured smile, curtsied a ready acquiescence to the polite invitation; and, in the next instant, might be seen sailing majestically through the mazes of the dance, closely attended by her respectful and devoted partner.

In the meantime, the unwilling musician seemed heartily tired of his employment, and looked as if he would have given a trifle not only to have got quit of that employment, but to have got out of the house altogether. Jones, however, was inexorable; and the more marked the fiddler's impatience became, the more unmercifully did he deal out his orders to "play up;" and much did he seem to delight, although he kept the satisfaction to himself, in the grin of irritation which his commands never failed to produce on the countenance of the hapless musician. Leaving, then, the general position of matters in the kitchen of the Drouthsloken in this state, we shall resume the particular history

of the laird's proceedings, which we fear the reader may think we have already too long neglected.

Of the ongoings of the evening the laird, who was now pretty well in the wind, was an attentive, but by no means a silent, spectator. In the enthusiasm which the proceedings passing before him had excited, he had mounted a chair, and from that elevated position was whooping, and yelling, and shouting, and clapping his hands—at once to express his own delight in the performances, and to encourage the performers.

“That’s it, my bonny lassie!” he screamed out, addressing the younger Tromp, whose agility particularly pleased him. “’Od ye’re just doin amazinly! That’s it! Kilt yer coats, ye cutty, and skelp at it withouten fear or dread! That’s the true way to mak a figure on a flure!”

“Feth, no amiss, guidwife, no amiss ava,” he said, and now addressing himself to the better half of mine host of the Drouthsloken, who was heaving like a seventy-four in a ground-swell—“no amiss ava, considerin the wecht ye carry. Ye’re just doin wonderfu, too, to be sae broad in the beam. My word, but ye are a sonsy lass,” he continued, his attention gradually directing itself to a contemplation of her personal dimensions. “If ye’re an unce, ye’re twenty stane, quarry wecht; and everybody kens that’s no scrimpit.”

“Weel dune, Jones! weel dune, lad! Hoo, hurrah! up wi’t! Ye’ve a pair o’ guid souple shanks o’ your ain. That’s it, lad—that’s it! Up wi’t! Hoo, hurrah, hurrah!”

And the laird clapped his hands with a vigour and energy that emitted a sound more like the contact of a pair of boards than human palms; and accompanying this expression of heartiness of feeling with whoops and shouts, that drowned the noise of both feet and fiddle.

Impartial in the distribution of his praises, the laird now directed his compliments to the various other members of

the dancing party, severally, and finished with mine host himself.

"Unco weel, laird, unco weel," he exclaimed, addressing that worthy performer. "Really, unco weel! ye've a wonderfu licht foot to hae sic a heavy stern. That's it, laird! Up wi' the left leg!—capital, capital!" And again the laird clapped his hands, and again raised his tremendous war-whoop.

Hitherto the dancers had paid no particular attention to the laird's noisy expressions of interest in their proceedings; but they so highly tickled Mr Jones, that, on the conclusion of the dance, he came laughing up to the laird, and asked him if he would not take a turn on the floor on the next occasion.

"No, thank ye, Mr Jones," replied the latter; "my dancin days are weel aboot owre now; but, though the flesh is weak, the spirit's willin, and, to mak mysel as guid company as possible, I'll tak a screed o' the fiddle an ye like; for I'm mair souple aboot the elbows than the ankles now-a-days, and, besides, I dinna think that fallow puts the richt smed-dum in his tunes. They're awfu draicky, and no like our Scotch measures, that mak ye fling your legs aboot like flails, till ye dinna ken whether your heels or your head's uppermost."

"Ah ha, very fair, laird," replied Jones, laughing; "and although I have reasons for keeping all relief from the fiddler as long as possible, I am so curious to hear your performance, that I, for my part, consent to your taking a turn of his instrument, provided he will allow you."

"We'll try him," replied the laird, briefly, and at the same time stepping down from his high place, and thereafter proceeding with Jones towards the musician of the evening, in order to offer his services in the way of assisting him.

"Friend," said Jones to the one-eyed minstrel, while the

laird stood behind, or rather beside him, waiting the result of his application—"friend, have you any objection to be relieved a little in your labours? Here is a brother musician, who would gladly take a turn with you, provided you would favour him with the loan of your instrument."

The only reply of the fiddler was a sullen, dissentient growl; for he was as averse to speaking as to exposing his countenance.

"What! won't you lend our friend here your fiddle?" said Jones, now bursting out into a fit of suppressed laughter, which seemed, from its heartiness, and the relief which it evidently afforded him, to have been long pent up. "Do, man, do—you had better do. *I'll* be much obliged to you"—with marked emphasis on the pronoun, which he further increased by a gentle but significant tread on the toe of the perplexed minstrel, who, after returning the secret intimation of Jones by a smile and an intelligent leer of his open eye, handed the fiddle to the laird without saying a word.

The incident which we have just described was unobserved by any other party but those concerned in it; or, at least, if it was observed, it was not understood; and in this predicament also stood he who had the best opportunity of seeing it—namely, the laird. He saw all that passed between Jones and the fiddler; but he could not make out what it meant; nor did he seem to concern himself about discovering it. Having got the fiddle into his possession, the laird commenced tuning it with great assiduity, and with a bow stroke that showed he was well practised in the use of the instrument. The tuning effected to his mind, he struck up, with great vigour, a ranting Scotch reel, which he played with uncommon spirit and skill. At first, the novelty of the measure took the greater part of the audience by surprise. For a time they could make nothing of it; but music being a universal language, both the spirit and rhythm of the tune soon began to be perceived and appre-

ciated; and, with a little schooling from Jones, who seemed not only to understand the music, but to be delighted with it, the dancers were placed in the order of a reel; and, by a vigilant superintendence of their motions on the part of the latter, they contrived to get through the figure with tolerable correctness. All were delighted with the new dance. It was repeated again and again, and every time with increased success, and a diminishing necessity for the interference of Jones, who, having entered fully into the spirit of the mirthful train, whooped and yelled as vociferously as ever the laird had done. His enthusiasm was infectious; all caught it—even the broad-beamed wife of Vander Tromp, who moved under the inspiring influence of the laird's bow with an agility that no one could have believed her ponderous person capable of; while the others, including mine portly host himself, flung, and flew, and shuffled, as madly as the witches in the midnight dance in Alloway Kirk. The spell, in short, of the laird's music was complete, and each owned the hilarious spirit which it was so well calculated to diffuse over all who were within reach of its influence—in other words, over all who were within hearing of the laird's admirably-played fiddle. Inspired with additional glee by these indications of the powerful effect of his music, the laird still further heightened its influence by breaking out, as he played, into short, abrupt shouts, which were responded to, from time to time, by the male dancers, but with most especial emphasis by Jones, who seemed to be, altogether, at the very acme of human enjoyment.

It was while the revellers were thus dinning the drowsy ear of night with their obstreperous mirth, and while they were yet in the full career of enjoyment, that four persons suddenly entered the kitchen of the Drouthsloken. They were in the garb of seamen, wearing large, shaggy pea-jackets, and low, round-crowned, glazed hats, with circular flaps projecting behind. Although, however, all were dressed

nearly alike, there was one who evidently took the lead amongst them. He was a young man, and had an air of authority in his manner to which the rest seemed to pay deference. Some differences, too, in his outer habiliments, notwithstanding of the general resemblance that prevailed in this particular, pointed him out as of a superior grade to the others. This person was not unknown to the inmates of the house. He was recognised as Captain Hagedorn of the Jungfrau of Rotterdam—a man of fierce, irascible temper, and an ardent, although not very acceptable, admirer of Juliana. On his entrance, therefore, he was immediately greeted as an acquaintance by Tromp, his wife, and their two daughters—by Juliana, however, with an evident confusion and embarrassment of manner. To these greetings, Hagedorn vouchsafed the return only of a surly and unintelligible muttering, while he proceeded to provide himself with a chair, on which he placed himself directly opposite the one-eyed minstrel, at whom he threw, from time to time, looks of the most malignant ferocity.

All, especially Juliana, who had reasons for fearing the worst, seemed impressed with the belief that the fellow was bent on mischief, and that he had come there for the especial purpose. Of this they were more convinced, on observing the brass-tipped sheaths of cutlasses projecting from beneath the pea-jackets of the intruders. Their fears were not long of being realised.

“Tromp,” said Hagedorn (we take the liberty of translating, in this, and all other similar cases), “I thought you kept a regular, decent house. Such is the character you pretend to, at any rate.”

“And such,” replied Tromp, with a blush of honest indignation, “is the character I maintain. Who shall gainsay it?”

“Why, there are some things going on here to-night that don’t look much like it,” replied Hagedorn. “Know ye,

Tromp, or does Juliana know, who this one-eyed gallant is?" pointing to the late serenader.

"Whether they do or not, they shall soon know, and so shall you to your cost, Hagedorn!" replied the minstrel, starting to his feet, and hastily stripping off the disguise, eye-patch and all, in which he was enveloped; a proceeding which discovered to the astonished onlookers—not, however, including either Jones or Juliana, who had a previous knowledge of his identity—a tall, handsome, gentlemanly-looking young man, well known as Sir Lionel Musgrave, one of the gayest and most respected of those English gentlemen who shared the misfortunes and exile of Charles II. during the existence of the Commonwealth.

"Ha!" said Hagedorn, starting to his feet, on Musgrave discovering himself. "So, I have unearthed the fox, eh!" And, as he spoke, he made a grasp at Musgrave's throat; which the latter evaded by adroitly stepping back a pace, when he instantly drew his sword and made a pass at Hagedorn, who, however, skilfully warded it off with his cutlass, to which he had had recourse the moment he missed his hold of his antagonist. These proceedings were, of course, a signal to all the other men in the apartment to muster on their respective sides; and this they instantly did. Hagedorn's men immediately drew; Jones and his party did the same; and the women ran screaming from the scene of the impending contest. In one instant after, a general *melée* commenced. There were deep oaths, overturning of tables, and clashing of swords in every direction, and all the other characteristics of a tremendous and very serious hubbub. Blows, too, were not wanting. They fell thick and fast on all sides.

Hitherto our friend the laird had remained an idle, but sufficiently-astonished spectator of the strange and sudden scene that had been thus brought before his visual organs. Though an idle, he was not altogether, however, a mute witness of the proceedings that were going forward.

“’Od! this is a queer business!” he muttered to himself. “Wha on earth wad hae thocht that yon blin-ee’d, broken-doon-lookin soul o’ a fiddler wad hae turned oot a braw young swanky like that? Na, na, that’ll no do,” suddenly added the laird, and now referring to the circumstance of Jones being hard pressed by two of the intruders. “Twa on ane—that’ll never do.” And the laird looked around him for some weapon wherewith he might compensate the odds against his friend. Nothing of this kind more efficient than the tongs presenting itself, the laird leaped down from the table on which he had been perched in the quality of musician, and, seizing the afore-mentioned instrument by the feet, advanced upon the foe, shouting, “Stan to them, Jones! stan to them, lad! till I gie them a taste o’ the tangs!” And, in the same instant, he discharged a blow at the head of one of Jones’ assailants that laid him senseless on the floor. Finding his first effort so successful, the laird repeated the experiment on the prostrate man’s companion with precisely the same result. Down he went also with a fractured skull. “That’s the way!” shouted the laird, now greatly excited by his own destructive exertions; “ca’ them down like nine-pins! Soop them aff the face o’ the yearth!”

At this moment, the laird’s Io Pæans were interrupted by the entrance of a party of the town-guard, whom Tromp had summoned to his aid. These immediately seized on the intruders, as they were pointed out by the latter—the fallen men having so far recovered as to be now sitting up, although evidently sick and giddy from the effects of the laird’s blows, and looking, as he said himself, “unco white aboot the gills”—and marched them off to the guard-house, to answer in due time to the judicial authorities of the city for the breach of the peace of which they had been guilty.

On the kitchen of the Drouthsloken being cleared of the enemy, an investigation into the extent of personal injury

sustained took place, when it was found that this was, after all, very trivial, consisting only of two or three slight flesh wounds, of which Musgrave bore two, and one or two others one apiece.

"And now, laird," said Jones, addressing the latter, "what share of the honours have you got?"

"Deil a scratch," replied the laird. "Feth, I didna gie them time for that. I didna stan whilly-whain wi' them, wi' a bit shabble in my haun, as ye a' did, but gied them richt knock-me-doon thuds at ance—sent them owre like stots, ane after the ither. Feth! commen me to a pair o' tangs in a kitchen row. It maks clean wark. I'll think mair o' them as a weapon, baith o' offence and defence, than ever I did."

"In such hands as yours, laird, they certainly are a sufficiently-formidable weapon. Had it it not been for them and you together, I would scarce have got off so scatheless as I have done. I owe you a good turn, and it shall not be forgotten. I promised you an introduction to the king; and I shall not only fulfil that promise, but, as my word goes a long way with him, I shall give such an account of you as, I answer for it, will insure you a favourable reception, and probably procure you some still more substantial tokens of his regard."

"Ou, thank ye, sir, thank ye," said the laird; but I dinna see that I hae dune onything the nicht that should entitle me to ony special favour frae his most gracious Majesty. What interest can he possibly hae in a kitchen collyshangy like this?"

"More than you're aware of, perhaps, laird; but never mind that in the meantime. Here comes Tromp, to read us a lecture, I daresay, on the evening's occurrences, although it was none of our fault either. Ha, Musgrave, my spark!" continued Jones, and now turning to that gallant—"didst think I couldn't have known thee? 'Od's fish,

man, I would have known the cut of thy jib, although thou hadst been sewn in a sack."

"Faith, your ——" A wink from Jones prevented the word that was about to follow. The wink was understood. "Faith, my friend," said Musgrave, laughing, "to tell a truth, I had no idea you were here. It was intended for a stolen march—to see whether I could not win my wager, by cutting ye out in the good graces of our landlord's fair daughter July." The conversation between Jones and Musgrave was here interrupted by the approach of Tromp, who came not, as the latter had suspected, to complain of what had occurred, but merely to request that the gentlemen would now retire, as it was getting late, and as his household was in a state of great alarm and confusion, in consequence of what had taken place.

The request was too respectfully made, and in itself too reasonable, to admit of the smallest objection. The party immediately donned their hats and cloaks, when Jones, taking the laird by the hand, told him to remain where he was for the night, and that he would wait upon him on the following morning to conduct him to the king.

Agreeably to his promise, early in the forenoon of the following day, Jones, attended by a gay band of cavaliers, entered the apartment in which the laird was at breakfast.

"Oh, Mr Jones, hoo are ye?" said the latter, rising from his seat on the entrance of the former. "I'm sure this is very guid o' ye. Nane the waur o' the bit stramash we had last nicht, I hope?"

"Oh! not a bit, not a bit, kind thanks to you for that, laird," replied Jones. "Now, my friend," continued the latter, "I am better than my word: I promised to bring you to the king; instead of this, I have brought the king to you. Any objection, laird, to take me for your lawful, but unfortunate king? I am Charles," he said, in a tone of more earnest emphasis.

Need we describe the laird's amazement at this astounding disclosure? We need not. The reader will conceive it. Although he looked unutterable things, all that he said was—

‘Gude preserve me! is that a fact?’ pronounced in the slow, deliberate tone of overwhelming and perplexed amazement.

The sequel of our tale is soon told. Charles settled a small pension on the laird—all that his circumstances at the time would afford—on which he lived for several years at the Hague. He subsequently found his way back to Scotland, the distracted state of the king's affairs preventing the regular payment of his pension. In the meantime, years rolled on, and changes took place, and amongst these came the Restoration. Charles was restored to the throne of his ancestors. On this throne the monarch had not been many days seated, when he was informed by one of the pages in waiting that they had been much annoyed by an old grey-headed Scotchman, with a large flat blue bonnet on his head, insisting on admission to His Majesty's presence.

“Did he give his name?” replied the monarch.

“He did, please your majesty,” replied the page; “he said he was sure that, if we would inform your majesty that it was the Laird of Lucky's How who sought admission, your majesty would instantly grant him an audience.

“He was right,” said Charles, smiling. “I recollect the honest man well. Admit him next time he presents himself.”

The laird came, was admitted, and was received with a most cordial welcome by the good-natured monarch. They talked over the occurrences of the evening they had spent in the kitchen of the Drouthsloken; and the laird was finally dismissed, with a promise, shortly afterwards redeemed, of his being reinstated in his patrimonial lands. To this other gratuities were added, to an amount that amply compen-

sated him, as he often himself said, for all that he had suffered in the royal cause. Some will say, perhaps, and with too much truth, that Charles was not so grateful to all his friends; but, in the present instance, we have only to do with the case of the Laird of Lucky's How.

THE ABDUCTION.

THE farm of Kelpiehaugh, at a short distance from Lessud-den, was, at an early period of the St Boswell's meetings, occupied by Giles Ramsay—a man who, as often happens in Scotland, was not loth to admit that “his grey mare was the better horse.” He liked the philosophy of the old ballad quoted by Shakspeare, and received it as a general maxim, that “nought's to be had at a woman's hand” unless, in every case, “ye gie her a' the plea.” And, verily, Matty did not love him the worse for his correct notions of woman-kind, though, as for anything like gratitude for his easy submission to her entire authority, she knew nothing of the sentiment, if she did not heartily despise it. The reason was indeed plain enough; for she had the capacity to know that, whatever superiority nature intended her husband should possess over her, in his character of one of the lords of the creation, he had none whatever in the capacity of her husband. In this there was a secret which she communicated to no one; and that was simply, that Giles was, in all respects, a stupid, simple, honest “cudden,” and she was one of the cleverest dames that ever made a good-natured husband cry “barlafummil” in a matrimonial skirmish. Yet, with all the guidwife's cleverness, she had not been able either to prevent Giles from getting behind with his rent—the more by token as, we fancy, that Kelpiehaugh was too dear—or to get “the glaikit hizzy,” Mary her daughter, well buckled to a canny laird, who might help them to pay up their arrears. The first was clearly

—but the second might have been termed some

what extraordinary, seeing the young woman was as fair as Dowsabell.

Something as regarded the rent depended upon the next sale of cattle at St Boswell's, for which honest Giles had ready six as good stirks as ever grazed on a green lea; and it was arranged between him and the better partner of the matrimonial firm, that he must get six pounds for every head of them, otherwise he might have small chance for "love's roundelay" on his return.

"It will mak thirty-six pounds, Giles, said Matty; "and that will enable us to pay up ten pounds o' oor arrears."

"And what will I get for a superplus o' a pound a-head on them?" said Giles.

"The liberty to buy a new gown for Mary," replied she, "that we may try to get her aff at the next fair. But, if ye sell them for a pound less, I rede ye to seek a quieter bield for your hame than Kelpiehaugh will be on your return."

And so primed, old Giles set off with his six stirks to St Boswell's. He arrived at the green, and exposed his bestial in the most favourable manner he could; but he found that Matty's price did not accord with the humour of the buyers, who probably thought proper to judge for themselves in the question of value. The time passed, and Giles saw before him nothing but the necessity of driving the stirks back again to Kelpiehaugh—an operation he by no means relished. As he stood musing on the apparently forlorn hope of a customer, an old man, much bent, with a grey beard, and a patch over his left eye as big as the blind of him of forging celebrity, "Blackpatch" himself, came up to him, and at once offered him eight pounds a-head for his stock. The old farmer wondered, smiled, and accepted. The bargain was struck, and forty-eight good pounds were instanter placed in the hands of the seller.

"Now I have a favour to ask of you, good Mr Ramsay," said the buyer.

"It will be an unreasonable request I winna grant to ane wha has gien me my ain price," replied the farmer. "What is't?"

"That you will drive the cattle home to Kelpiehaugh, and keep them there at my risk and cost till I send for them," said the other.

"Granted, and wi' thanks," said the farmer.

"I have another favour to ask," said the other.

"As mony's ye like, sir, if they're a' o' a kind," answered the farmer, smiling. "Out wi't."

"That you'll give me a bed at Kelpiehaugh to-night," said the old man. "I have a distance to ride, and would fain halve the stage, by making your house a half-way resting-place."

"Of a surety, sir," replied the farmer; "ye'll hae the best bed and the best victuals Kelpiehaugh can boast o', and nae boast after a', though Matty, I am proud to say, kens hussyskep as weel as ony woman in a' the shirrdom. Will ye gang wi' me, or come yersel?"

"I will come by myself," said the buyer. "I have some other affairs to settle before the fair breaks up, and it may be later than your time before I have finished."

The matter being thus arranged, the two parted. Giles was anxious to know who his customer was; but no one could tell anything of him, and the hour getting forward to the gloaming, he set off again for his farm, with his forty-eight pounds in his pocket, and the cattle before him. On his approaching Kelpiehaugh, Matty, along with her fair daughter, was at the door, waiting for him. It was now dark; but she could hear his voice in articulations which pleased her not. "Hey! hey! yaud! yaud!" and then came the sound of a thwack on the backs of the lazy troop he was driving before him.

"And ye've brought them back again, ye sorry simpleton?" cried the wife.

The husband answered nothing, but continued thumping at the nolt with his "hey," and "yaud," and "pheu"—every ejaculation having the effect of an objurgatory attack on the dame herself.

"Ay, ay," she cried, "thump them and drive them into the shed, Giles, that they may be ready for the roup o' our plenishing and stocking. The auctioneer's hammer will knock them down wi' mair pith than that rung ye are using, wi' a' the spite o' an angry disappointed man, wha couldna mak a sale o' his ain kye."

Her cutting words had still no effect upon the good-natured farmer, who continued his operations till he got the six steers safely lodged in their shed. He then came into the house quietly, and, with a "heigh-ho, that job's weel owre," sat him down by the side of the fire, opposite to his wife and daughter. For some minutes there was silence in the house of Kelpiehaugh; the reason whereof was that Matty's authority was for once apparently disregarded, or set at naught, by the apparent absence of all tokens of fear and contrition on the part of her mate. She had already indicated sufficiently her sense of his stupidity, and given him a peremptory notice of what he might expect for the next half-year to come; yet there was he, against all custom, and all the laws of marital subordination, sitting as easy and comfortable as if he merited her praise and deserved her blessing. She could only look daggers at him, with occasionally an expression of staring wonder at a nonchalance that disproved twenty years of authority.

"Is there naething in Kelpiehaugh for its master to eat or drink?" said he, at last, in a calm, soft voice. "A hard day's wark deserves something at e'en."

"Is he adding impertinence to his folly?" thought the dame, as she sat doggedly silent and immoveable.

"Come, Mary," added he; "since Matty will gie us naething, rise, lassie, and gie your father the best that's in the

house, and, by way o' bribe, here's a new gown to ye—the bonniest and brawest I could find at St Boswell's."

The girl started up and laid hold of the dress. The bright hues glared on her eyes. The dame cast a side-eye on the gaudy article.

"Waur and waur, Giles," she ejaculated. "Are ye mad, man? What, in the name o' a' that's guid or ill, possessed ye? Will that gown pay our rent?"

"Maybe it may," rejoined Giles. "Mary's the bonniest lass on this side o' the Tweed, and beauty's nae waur o' being weel buskit. It may bring her a husband wha'll pay our rent; and, if it doesna, there's nae skaith, seeing we may yet be able to do it oursels."

"The man's as mad as a March hare, or a gled-stung quey," cried Matty.

"But am I to get nae supper, Matty?" rejoined he, with the same calmness.

"The deil a bit," ejaculated the dame.

"Maybe this may bribe ye," said he, as he pulled out of another pocket a gown-piece, as bright as the other, for his beloved spouse.

The charm had no power, save that of increasing the wonder of the dame; and the statement which immediately followed, that there was a stranger to be entertained at Kelpiehaugh that night, roused her still farther. It was not till she began to look more narrowly into the face of her husband, that she observed a dry humour about him, that might be anything but the result of an unsuccessful attempt to dispose of his bestial, and, going up to him, she shook him heartily by the shoulders.

"Come, come, Giles," she said, "there's a secret at the bottom o' a' this, and maybe this may explain it."

And, seizing his pocket-book, she opened it, and pulled forth the bunch of notes. They were counted on the instant, and the eyes of the dame brightened up at every ad-

dition to the calculation. The farmer explained all, and, in the course of his narration, Matty's wonder waxed great again. She was not altogether satisfied. She looked at the notes, to see that they were not forged; glanced at Giles; fell into a brown study; looked at Mary; hemmed and heyed; and began to make preparations for the stranger. In about an hour afterwards, the old customer arrived, was ushered in to the fire, and took his seat, while Giles went to look to the putting-up of his horse, which, he observed, was as clever and clean-limbed a creature as that which carried the "fair ladye" and "true Thomas" over the Eildon Hills. The supper was, in the meantime, in the act of being served up. The old man coughed and told stories, Mary listened, and Matty eyed her guest with a peculiar expression, which made him rub his beard, cough more and more, and retire farther into the recess which he had taken possession of. Nor would the supper draw him forth; for he said he had supped before he came, yet had he no objection to drink the ale which Matty handed him, and was as merry as an old man might be, who had seen so many summers as his beard betokened. Many a thing they talked of, but they all concerned the farmer, and his wife and daughter; for the never a word would he say of himself, either as to what he was, or where he lived—the dry skeleton of a name, Mr Farquharson, being all he gratified them with, while, in return, he asked so much of the condition and doings of his host and family, that one might have thought he intended either to pay their arrears of rent, or marry the daughter, at the very least. The supper, of which he partook not, being done, he said he wished not to put them about in their arrangements, and would be very well pleased to lie in the small bed behind him, unless that were set apart for some other of the family.

"That ye may weel hae, sir," said Matty on the instant, "if ye hae a fancy to it. A sma' reward for the guid price

ye gae for the cattle. Mary can sleep for a nicht in the kitchen—for Jenny is at St Boswell's, and winna be hame before the morn."

"You will have only one night's trouble of me," replied the old man; "but you may have more of the cattle—eight at least—and I think I will better pay you beforehand, Mr Ramsay, that there may be no mistake when the men come to take them away."

And he put into the farmer's hand three times the sum he would have demanded for the keeping of the steers. The farmer would have refused the money, but Matty, whose by-play all along had been unnoticed by her husband, pinched him on the arm, and the words of rejection died away in his mouth. The parties afterwards retired to bed, leaving the strange visiter in the apartment allotted to him.

"I never did a better day's wark, guidwife," said the farmer to his partner, when they went up-stairs.

"Hush! hush! man, ye dinna ken what ye have done," replied she; and the next moment she was busy whispering something in the ear of the farmer. He started instantly, cried, "Impossible, impossible!" and stood for a moment in dismay and consternation. But Matty gave him no time for thought. She was again busy with his ear; and the next exhibition he made was of an opposite character—a strange expression was upon his face, and he slapped her upon the back in the extravagance of a feeling that, whether betokening good-humour or not, seemed to have no bounds. In a short time, the house was as quiet as Grimalkin himself could have wished it, when bent on a hunting foray. All had apparently gone to bed, and the stillness continued till considerably after midnight. A slow tap at the kitchen-door showed that one individual at least was astir.

"Mary, Mary, are you awake?" said a voice, that at least was uninterrupted by a cough.

The answer was a whisper from within. After some parley, the door was opened, and a series of secret doings, among which the opening of the outer door of the house, a recourse to the stable, the saddling of the fleet horse, and other furtive preparations for a departure, were the most important. During all this time, the figure of a female wrapped in a cloak stood in the recess of the door. The horse was quietly walked to the loan, and the mantled figure glided as secretly as a ghost, who knows that the pimp Gallus will shortly awaken, to the starting-post. One swing brought her to the pad, and another placed before her one whom the light of the faint moon exhibited without a bend in his body or beard on his chin. Away they set—

“On, on they rade, and farther on—

The steed gaed swifter than the wind—

Until they reach'd a desert wide,

And living land was left behind.”

Not a word passed between the couple. The one was occupied spurring on the steed, and the other clung to him, as if love had nerved her arms, and made them as tenacious of the grasp of his waist as Lenora, of German celebrity, was of the soulless body of her Wilhelm. Sometimes he slackened his pace, to ascertain whether the guidman of Kelpiehaugh was up and away in quest of runaway bride, like the Græmes after the heiress of Netherby, over Cannobie-lee; and then, when he thought he heard the clatter of a horse's hoof, he applied the spur again, and away they went, over moss and muir, with such speed as love and fear in the rider may alone impart to the obedient steed. At other times, the space of a few minutes was devoted to soft whispers, and the gallant pressed the encircling arms of his fair one, and sighed as he felt her embrace as tight as a lover's heart could wish. He was as happy as one who is on the verge of the enjoyment of stolen pleasures

can be in a world where lawful indulgences had no zest for him; and he turned his head for the muffled kiss, which was granted as freely as any rieving lover, even Lochinvar himself or Jock o' Hazeldean, could have desired. Nor less was he pleased with the pressure of her fair arms, which accompanied or followed the other demonstrations of her affection, and the speed of his steed, now safe, as he thought himself, from all pursuit, was quickened, that he might reach the goal, where all the joys of a long-sighed-for possession awaited him. At length he gave his horse breathing-time, and, taking himself a long inspiration—

“When, think ye, Mary,” said he, “I will send for the six steers I purchased from your father yesterday?”

“Maybe never, Robert,” was the whispered reply.

“You say right, love. It was never my intention,” said he. “I thought it but fair to leave old Giles some consideration for his daughter.”

A squeeze was the expression of the gratitude felt by the female for the boon so generously bestowed on the farmer of Kelpiehaugh.

“Was I known, think ye?” he continued. “I liked not the sharp eye of your mother. By my faith! I quailed under it. The devil an ancient carlin duenna in an old romance ever observed so sharp a look-out for the safety of her ward. But, ha! ha! Mary, we have outwitted the old dame, and let her catch us now, if she can. We want only two miles of Langholm, and then, hey! hey! and be merry, as the song says—

‘Now all this time let us be merry,’
And set nocht by this world a cherry.’

Safe in my house at Langholm, Mary, let Giles and his old dame enjoy the bargain they have got. They may sell the steers at the next fair of St Boswell's; but I will not so soon part with my Mary.”

"Na, I hope not," replied the whispering female.
"But hearna ye the sounds of a horse's feet?"

The lover turned his head.

"Your father, by the rood!" cried he; and, clapping spurs again to his horse, they set off at a quick gallop, with a view to distance their pursuer, who was no other than Giles Ramsay himself, mounted on one of his quickest plough-horses, and brandishing a huge cudgel, in the double act of beating his nag and threatening vengeance on the fugitives.

The pursued were now in danger of being overtaken; for the greater speed of the hunter was counterbalanced by the greater burden, and it was clearly a cast-up whether they would be able to escape the vengeance that awaited them. But, whatever might be the issue, there was no want of energy in either hand or heel of the abductor; and he lashed and spurred his steed more furiously as his fears increased—

"Still looking the sidelong woods among,
Before, around him, and behind;
And aye, whene'er the echo rung,
The steed flew swifter than the wind."

And no less energetic was the fearful pursuer, whose hearty thwacks upon the curpan of his shaggy cart-tracer, mixed with loud halloos, might be heard in the distance, awakening the echoes of the silent night. The lover relished not the appearance, and still less the cries, of the lusty farmer; and as little apparently did his companion—who, as the horse increased his speed, grasped her abductor round the waist—wish to fall into the hands of the enraged pursuer. Away they scoured, and, "Fear not, Mary—love will distance the old churl," fell from the lips of the panting lover, in reply to the inspiring pressure of her arms; while, "Na, na, Robert, flee for the love o' heaven," added more energy to the spur, and more passion to his breast. They reached

the skirts of the woody Langholm; but it was not the abductor's intention to stop at his residence, while he was in danger of being overtaken; so, striking to the left, and dashing into a *corrie*, or deep lirk of a hill, he stretched on with the flight of desperation. His wish was to clear the fern brae, as the height was called, and, getting into the thick wood at the back, make a sudden turn, and elude the quick eye of the farmer; but the latter kept dashing and bounding on, hallooing in the distance, and still brandishing his oaken ryss, in the most fearful demonstrations of a vengeance that would be contented with nothing less, apparently, than the body of the one, and the life of the other. Still the fond female turned her eyes behind, and, giving her companion reports of the progress of the pursuer, kept up his energies and alive his spirit.

"All the work of that accursed old duenna, your mother," muttered he.

"Ay, ay, nae doot, nae doot," rejoined she, and hugged him again more closely than ever. The turn of the fern hill did not seem, however, to bring the relief which it promised, for the couple were still within hail of the redoubted Giles; and his shouting reverberated among the rocks like the tally-ho of the hunter, or rather like the deep-mouthed bay of the pack.

But here a more extraordinary phenomenon presented itself, and that was an accession of strength to the sturdy Giles of no fewer than three horsemen, who, probably attracted by his war-whoop, had tendered their services in endeavouring to overtake and seize the fugitives. This circumstance was proclaimed by a united cry of the whole pursuers, which rung in the ears of the lover like the howl which met the Florentine on his visit to the region of the wicked in Hades. There was, however, more in the appearance of the strangers, as seen in the light of the now bright moon, than in their war-shout that carried dismay

to the breast of the abductor. What this was, he told not; but his muttering of "Who can have brought him and his servants to this part of the country at this time?" satisfied his companion that he knew the individuals who had thus opportunely joined the cause of the farmer; and now, if indeed that were possible, he urged his panting steed forward at a still quicker pace. His chance of escape was diminishing every moment. The horses of the assistants were fleetier than those of the farmer; and, if he did not succeed in overtaking the fugitives, it was too evident that they would accomplish for him the object he had in view. The lover seemed doubtful what he should do—whether still to press on, lay down his charge, or make a sweep round the hill, and take refuge in Langholm. A clump of trees now intervening between him and the party, he appeared to resolve suddenly on the last manœuvre; and his reason probably was, that he might have time to secrete his fair one among some of the outhouses of the mansion before the pursuers came up. Acting upon this resolution, he turned the head of his horse, swept in by the tail of the height, struck into a loan, and, after a rapid run of a few minutes, was opposite to the house of Langholm.

"Quick! quick, Mary! jump and follow me," he cried, as he took her in his arms. "This way," and he flew first to one door and then another. They were shut, and he had no alternative left but to take his fair charge into the mansion itself. Rushing up-stairs, and dragging after him his abducted love, he reached a small bedroom, thrust her into it, shut the door, locked it, and returned to face boldly his pursuers. By the time he arrived at the landing-place, his horse had sought the stable; and there was no apparent sign, save his appearance there at that hour, of his having been engaged in the unlawful undertaking for which he had been so hotly pursued.

"I have paid well for my love-errantry," said he, as he

took a handkerchief, and wiped the sweat from his face. "There is not another beauty in Scotland for whom I would have toiled as I have now done. Have I given them the slip? Mayhap I may, unless I am right in that fearful conjecture, suggested by the appearance of my strange pursuers."

"Ho, there!" cried the voice of a man, rushing up on horseback. "What is this, Robert?"

"My father!" ejaculated the youth; "what has brought you from Craigton at this hour?"

"Robert! Robert!" ejaculated a voice from a bedroom window, at that moment drawn up—"why have you placed a woman in my bedroom, and locked her in?"

"Is that you, my love?" rejoined the father, in answer to the cry of his wife. "Why, here is some infernal mystery. Your mother and I arrived here to-day. We heard you were at St Boswell's, and I left her here that I might go and join you at the market. Now I have returned to witness a scene that baffles all my wits. Here is a man who has a claim upon you which your mother corroborates by her extraordinary inquiry."

The cavalcade at that moment came up—Giles in the rear, still brandishing his rung, and muttering incoherent threats against the abductor. The youth was surrounded: his father cried for information, his mother screamed from the window Giles demanded restitution, and the voice of the abducted female was heard in shrill tones over all.

"Ha! Matty, lass, this is sad wark," cried the farmer, on recognising the voice of his wife.

"Is it possible, Robert Melville," said the father, "that you could disgrace your family and your pedigree, by carrying off the wife of this honest farmer—a woman stricken in years—and place her in the bedroom occupied by your mother?"

"It's owre true," cried Giles, with something like a sup-

pressed laugh. "I see her face at the window. He came to Kelpiehaugh habited as an auld man, wi' a grey beard stuck on his chin, and a scratch wig on his head; and, in return for a supper and a bed, carried aff my helpmate, wi' whom I hae lived, in love and honour, for thirty years."

The scene was getting more extraordinary. The young man was sceptical of the truth of Giles' statement; but he could not disprove it by stating what he conceived to be the veritable fact—that he had run away with Mary, the young daughter of the farmer of Kelpiehaugh. He looked at the latter, then turned up his eyes to the window, where he then saw only the face of his mother. Her cries still rung in his ears; the father called for the key; Giles insisted on the truth of his statement; and the inquiries of the servants mingled with the general confusion. By an impulse he could not resist, he gave his father the key; the door was opened, and the mother, who was now dressed, came down-stairs, along with her husband, followed by the female, on whom they turned eyes in which wonder and indignation alternated their suitable expressions. The female threw back her hood.

"We hae had a lang and a hard ride, Mr Melville," said she. "My feth, ye did weel, but your horse did better; and, Giles, man, ye did as I never saw ye do before."

"I couldna want ye, Matty," replied Giles; "and, if I havena testified my love for ye by this nicht's wark, never a man in Scotland ever proved his affection for his wife."

The absence of all ill-humour, the winks which Matty directed to the wonderstruck youth, and his apparent amazement, added to the puzzle which perplexed the minds of the father and the mother.

"What does all this mean, Robert?" cried the mother.

"For God's sake, explain this extraordinary affair!" rejoined the father.

The youth was still mute. At length Matty whispered

something in his ear. He spoke for the first time since the scene commenced.

"It may be as you say, Mrs Ramsay," said he.

"Aweel, it's a' richt," replied she; "but it may please Giles and mysel if ye will acknowledge it in the presence o' your father and mother."

"I have no objections," replied he; and, turning to his parents, who understood not one word of all this dialogue, and far less of the strange scene still acting around them, he added, "I hereby declare, in presence of you, as witnesses, that I hereby renounce all claim ——"

"To whom?" cried the mother; "to another man's wife — an aged matron? Fie, Robert! Say no more. Close the lips that would dishonour a son in presence of his parents."

"I hereby renounce all claim to six stirks at present lying at the farm of Kelpiehaugh, and promise never to trouble Giles Ramsay for the same."

"It's a' settled and adjusted," cried Matty. "I am satisfied; and Giles, I fancy, you are no ill-pleased wi' my nicht's wark?"

"I dinna ken which o' us hae dune best," replied the farmer. "Between us, our arrears o' rent will be paid up. My bargain was guid; but I freely admit yours is better."

"Then this affair is at last arranged?" said the youth.

The farmer assented. The worthy couple bade adieu to their friends, and proceeded on their way to Kelpiehaugh. We cannot tell what explanations took place at Langholm between the young man and his parents; neither can we tell precisely the import of the conversation that took place between the farmer and his wife on their journey homewards; but we strongly suspect they enjoyed a hearty laugh at the clever manœuvre of the dame. It is probable that Giles himself was in the secret; at least the good-humour he exhibited in getting again possession of his spouse would lead us to believe that he had been a willing

party in the plot that had been so cleverly laid and executed. How far the daughter was to blame has not been recorded; and, to do justice to the farmer and his wife, they never taxed her with indiscretion. She was some time afterwards married, and so put beyond the power of the wild youth who had been so completely foiled by the genius of a clever dame.

SIR PATRICK HUME.

A TALE OF THE HOUSE OF MARCHMONT.

SIR PATRICK HUME of Polwarth was elected representative of the County of Berwick in the year 1665, being then in the twenty-fifth year of his age. He was a lover of freedom, a lover of his country, and a staunch Presbyterian. In those days, however, a love of freedom was a dangerous principle either to avow or to carry into Parliament. The tyrant Charles, whom some falsely call the Merry Monarch, was then attempting to rule the empire with a rod of iron. You have all heard of his Long Parliament, and of his afterwards governing the country, like an absolute tyrant, without a Parliament at all. Fettered and servile as parliaments then were, young Hume had boldly stood forward as the advocate of civil and religious liberty; and, when the arbitrary monarch sent down a mandate to Scotland for a levy of men and of money, that he might carry his plans of despotism the more effectually into execution, Sir Patrick resisted the slavishness with which it was about to be obeyed.

“What!” exclaimed he, “are we mere instruments in the hands of the king—creatures appointed to minister to his pleasure? Are we not representatives of the people of Scotland—the representatives of their wants and their wishes, and the defenders of their rights? And shall we, as such, at the mere nod of a monarch, drag them from following their plough in the valley, or attending their hirsels on the bill—shall we do these things, and lay contributions on their cattle, on their corn, and on their coffers, merely because His Majesty wills it? Pause, my countrymen. The king

has no authority to compel such a measure, and it can only be rendered legal by the concurrence of the assembled representatives of the people."

"Treason!" vociferated the Duke of Lauderdale, who was the arch-minion of Charles; "before the Parliament of Scotland, I denounce Sir Patrick Hume as a dangerous man—as a plotter against the life and dignity of our sovereign lord the king!"

"What!" exclaimed Sir Patrick, indignantly fixing his eyes upon Lauderdale. "Though there may be amongst us a slave who would sell his country for a royal smile, I still hope that this is a FREE Parliament, and it concerns all the members to be FREE in what concerns the nation."

From that day, Sir Patrick Hume became a suspected man, and the eyes of the king's creatures were upon him; and when, two years afterwards, Charles endeavoured to put down the people by the sword, and establish garrisons throughout the country, again the Laird of Polwarth stood foremost in the ranks of opposition, and resisted his power. The king accordingly ordered his privy council to crush so dangerous a spirit; and Sir Patrick was confined in Stirling Castle, where, with the exception of a short interval, he was imprisoned for two years.

Britain had long been distracted with the pretended discovery of fabulous or ridiculous plots against the royal family; and the perjury of paid miscreants, like the infamous Titus Oates, was causing the scaffolds to run with gore. But tyranny being glutted with Catholic blood, and the extinguishing of what were called Popish plots, the myrmidons of Charles (who lived a libertine, and died a Papist) professed that they had discovered a Protestant plot against his royal person. In this plot the incorruptible Algernon Sydney, Lord Russell, Mr Bailie of Jerviswoode, and Sir Patrick Hume, were included. They beheld their common country withering and wasting beneath the grasp of a tyrant;

and true it is they had united together to restore it to freedom, but they were innocent of designs against his life, or even of a wish to dethrone him. They did not, however, act sufficiently in concert, and were unable to bring their plans into operation. A price was set upon their heads—some fled into exile, and others sought refuge on the mountain and in the wilderness; while the amiable Russell died upon the scaffold.

It was near nightfall, in the month of September, 1684, when Jamie Winter, who was joiner on the estate of Polwarth, ran breathless up to Redbraes Castle, and knocked loudly at the door. It was opened by John Allan, the landsteward, who, perceiving his agitation, inquired—

“In the name o’ guidness, Jamie, what’s happened, or what do ye want?”

“Dinna ask, Maister Allan,” replied Jamie; “but, for Heaven’s sake, tell me, is Sir Patrick at hame? and let me speak to him presently, as ye value his life.”

“Follow me, then, Jamie,” said the other, “and come in quietly, that the servants mayna observe onything extraordinary; for we live in times when a man canna trust his ain brither.”

The honest joiner was ushered into a room where Sir Patrick sat in the midst of his family, acting at once as their schoolmaster and their playmate.

“Weel, James,” said the laird, “I understand ye hae been at Berwick the day. Ye’ve got early back. What uncas heard ye there?”

“I watna, Sir Patrick,” replied the other; “now-a-days, I think, there’s naething unco that can happen. Satan seems to have been let loose on our poor misgoverned country. But I wish to speak to your honour very particularly, and in private, if you please.”

“You may speak on, James,” said the laird; “I am private in the midst o’ my ain family.”

"Wi' your guid leave, sir," returned the cautious servant, "I wad rather the bairns were oot o' the way, for what I hae to say is no proper for them to hear, and the sooner ye are acquainted wi' it the better."

Sir Patrick led his younger children out of the room, but requested Lady Polwarth and their eldest daughter, Grizel, a lovely dark-haired girl, about twelve years of age, to remain.

"You are the bearer of evil tidings, James," said he, as he returned, "but you may tell them now—it is meet that my wife should hear them, if they concern me; and," added he, taking Grizel's hand in his, "I keep no secrets from my little secretary."

"God bless her!" said James, "she's an auld-farrant bairn, as wise as she's bonny, I ken that. But, your honour, I am, indeed, the bearer of evil tidings. A party o' troopers arrived at Berwick this morning, and it was nae secret there that they would be baith at Jerviswoode and Redbraes before midnight. I heard them talk o' the premium that was set upon your life, and slipped out o' the town immediately, without performing a single transaction, or speaking a word to a living creature. How I've got along the road is mair than I can tell; for I was literally sick, blind, and desperate wi' grief. I've this minute arrived, and whatever can be done to save you maun be done instantly."

Lady Polwarth burst into tears. Sir Patrick grasped the hand of his faithful servant. Little Grizel gazed in her father's face with a look of silent despair, but neither spoke nor wept.

"Oh, fly! fly instantly, my dear husband!" cried Lady Polwarth, "and Heaven direct you."

"Be composed, my love," said Sir Patrick; "I fear that flight is impossible; but some means of evading them may perhaps be devised."

"Oh, my leddy," said Jamie Winter, "to flee is out o' the

question at thegither. Government has its spies at every turn o' the road—in every house in the country—even in this house. Our only hope is to conceal Sir Patrick; but how or where is beyond my comprehension."

Many were the schemes devised by the anxious wife—many the suggestions of her husband, and honest Jamie proposed numerous plans—but each was, in its turn, rejected as being unsafe. More than an hour had passed in these anxious deliberations; within three hours more, and the king's troops would be at his gate. Grizel had, till now, remained silent, and dashing away the first tear that rolled down her cheek, she flung her arms around her father's neck, and exclaimed, in an eager and breathless whisper—

"I ken a place, faither—I ken a place that the king's troopers and his spies will never find out; and I'll stop beside ye, to bear ye company."

"Bless the bairn!" said Sir Patrick, pressing her to his breast; "and where's the place, dearest?"

"The aisle below Polwarth Kirk, faither," returned Grizel. "Nae trooper will find out such a hiding-place; for the mouth's a bit wee hole, and the long grass, and the docks, and the nettles grow owre it, and I could slip out and in without trampling them down; and naebody would think o' seeking ye there, faither."

Lady Polwarth shuddered, and Sir Patrick pressed the cheek of his lovely daughter to his lips.

"Save us a', bairn!" said Jamie, "there's surely something no earthly about yer young leddyship, for ye hae mair sense than us a' put thegither. The aisle is the very place. I'll steal awa, and hae a kind o' bed put up in it, and tak ither twa or three bits o' necessary things; and, Sir Patrick, ye'll slip out o' the house and meet me there as soon as possible."

Within an hour, Sir Patrick had joined Jamie Winter in

the dark and dismal aisle. The humble bed was soon and silently fitted up, and the faithful servant, wishing his master "farewell," left him alone in his dreary prison-house. Slow and heavily the hours of darkness moved on. He heard the trampling of the troopers' horses galloping in quest of him. The oaths and the imprecations of the riders fell distinctly on his ears. Amidst such sounds he heard them mention his name. But his heart failed not. He knelt down upon the cold damp floor of his hiding-place—upon the bones of his fathers—and there, in soundless, but earnest prayer, supplicated his father's God to protect his family—to save his country—to forgive his persecutors, and to do with him as seemed good in his sight. He arose; and, laying himself upon his cold and comfortless bed, slept calmly. He awoke shivering and benumbed. Faint streaks of light stole into the place of death through its narrow aperture, dimly revealing the ghastly sights of the charnel-house, and the slow reptiles that crawled along the floor. Again night came on, and the shadows of light, if I may use the expression, which revealed his cell, died away. A second morning had come, and a second time the feeble rays had been lost in utter darkness. It was near midnight, and the slender stock of provisions which he had brought with him were nigh exhausted. He started from his lowly couch—he heard a rustling among the weeds at the mouth of the aisle—he heard some one endeavouring to remove the fragment of an old gravestone that covered it.

"Faither!" whispered an eager voice—"faither—it is me—yer ain Grizel!"

"My own, devoted, my matchless child!" said Sir Patrick, stretching his hands towards the aperture, and receiving her in his arms.

She sat down beside him on the bed—she detailed the search of the troopers—she stated that they were watched in their own house—that a spy was set over the very victuals

that came from their table, lest he should be concealed near, and fed by his family.

“But what of that?” continued the light-hearted and heroic girl; “while my plate is supplied, my faither’s shall not be empty; and here,” added she, laughing—“here is a flask of wine, cakes, and a sheep’s-head. But I will tell you a story about the sheep’s-head. It was placed on a plate before me at dinner-time. The servant was out o’ the room, naebody was looking, and I whupped it into my apren. Little Sandy wanted a piece, and, turning round for it, and missing the head, ‘Ah, mother!’ he cried, ‘our Grizzy has swallowed a sheep’s-head, bones and a’, in a moment!’—‘Wheesht, laddie!’ said my mother; ‘eat ye next ane then.’—‘Oh, ye greedy Grizzy!’ said Sandy, shaking his little nieve in my face, ‘I’ll mind you for this.’—‘I’m sure Sandy will ne’er forget me,’ said I, and slipped away out to hide the sheep’s-head in my own room; and as soon as I thought naebody was astir, I creeped out quietly by the window, and got down here behint the hedges; and I’ll come every night, faither. But last nicht the troopers were still about the house.”

In spite of his misery, Sir Patrick laughed at the ingenuity of his beloved and heroic daughter; then wept and laughed again, and pressed her to his bosom.

He had passed many weeks in this cheerless dungeon, with no companion during the day save a volume of Buchanan’s Psalms; but every night he was visited by his intrepid daughter, who at once supplied him with food, and beguiled the hours of his solitude. He was sitting in the gloomy cell, conning over his favourite volume—the stone at the aperture had been pushed aside a few inches to admit the light more freely, and the weeds at the entrance were now bowed down and withered by the frost—a few boys were playing in the churchyard, and tossing a ball against the kirk. Being driven from the hand of an unskilful

player, it suddenly bounded into the aisle. Sir Patrick started, and the book dropped from his hand. Immediately the aperture was surrounded by the boys, and the stone removed. They stood debating who should enter, but none had sufficient courage. At length one more hardy than the rest volunteered to enter, if another would follow him. The laird gave himself up as lost, for he knew that even the tale of a schoolboy would effect his ruin. He was aware he could disperse them with a single groan; but even that, when told to his enemies, might betray him. At length three agreed to enter, and the feet of the first already protruded into the aisle. Sir Patrick crept silently to its farthest corner, when the gruff voice of the old gravedigger reached his ear, shouting—

“The mischief’s in the callants, and nae guid. What are ye doing there? Do ye want the ghaists o’ the auld Humes about yer lugs?”

The boys fled amain, and the old man came growling to the mouth of the aisle.

“The deevil’s in the bairns o’ Polwarth,” said he; “for they wad disturb the very dead in their graves. I’ll declare, they’ve the stane frae the mouth o’ the aisle!”

He stooped down, and Sir Patrick saw his grim visage through the aperture, and heard him thus continue his soliloquy, as he replaced the stone—

“Sorrow tak the hands that moved the stane! Ye’re hardly worth the covering up again, for ye’re a profitless hole to me; and I fancy him that I should lay in ye next, be he whaur he likes, will gang the gate that his freend Bailie gaed yesterday on a scaffold. A gravedigger’s a puir bisness, I am sorry to say, in our king’s reign; and the fient a ane thrives but the common executioner.”

So saying, he enveloped Sir Patrick in utter darkness. That night Grizel and her father left the aisle together, and from her he learned the particulars of what he had heard

muttered by the gravedigger, that his friend, Mr Bailie of Jerviswoode, had been executed the previous day.

Disguised, and in the character of a surgeon, he by by-ways reached London, and from thence fled to France. On the death of Charles, and when the bigot James ascended the throne, Sir Patrick was one of the leaders of the band of patriots who drew their swords in behalf of a Protestant succession.

That enterprise was unsuccessful; and, after contending, almost singlehanded, against the enemies of his religion and his country, he and his family sought refuge in a foreign land. He assumed the name of Dr Peter Wallace, and they took up their abode in Utrecht. There poverty and privations sought and found the exiles. They had parted with every domestic, and the lovely Grizel was the sole servant and helper of her mother, and, when their work was done, the assistant of her father in the education of the younger children; for he had no longer the means of providing them a tutor. Yet theirs was a family of love—a family of happiness; and poverty purified their affections. But their remittances from Scotland were not only scanty but uncertain. Till now Sir Patrick had borne his misfortunes with resignation, and even cheerfulness; he cared not that he was stripped of attendants, and of every luxury of life; yet at times the secret and unbidden tears would start into his eyes, as he beheld his wife and his fair daughter performing, without a murmur, the most menial offices. But the measure of his trials was not yet full—luxuries were not only denied him, but he was without food to set before his children. The father wept, and his spirit heaved with anguish. Grizel beheld his tears, and she knew the cause. She spoke not; but, hastening to her little cabinet, she took from it a pair of jewelled bracelets, and, wrapping herself up in a cloak, she took a basket under her arm, and hurried to the street. The gentle being glided along the

streets of Utrecht, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, and shunning the glance of the passengers, as if each knew her errand. She stood before a shop in which all manner of merchandise was exposed, and three golden balls were suspended over the door. She cast a timid gaze into the shop—thrice she passed and repassed it, and repeated the timid glance. She entered—she placed the bracelets upon the counter.

“How much?” was the laconic question of the shopman.

Grizel burst into tears. He handed her a sum of money across the counter, and deposited the bracelets in his desk. She bounded from the shop with a heart and a step light as a young bird in its first pride of plumage. She hastened home with her basket filled. She placed it upon the table. Lady Polwarth wept, and fell upon her daughter’s neck.

“Where have you been, Grizel?” faltered her father.

“Purchasing provisions for a bauble,” said she; and the smile and the tear were seen on her cheek together.

But many were the visits which the gentle Grizel had to pay to the Golden Balls, while one piece of plate was pledged after another, that her father, and her mother, and her brethren, might eat, and not die; and even then the table of Sir Patrick, humble as it was, and uncertainly provided for, was open to the needy of his countrymen. Thus three years passed—the memorable 1688 arrived. Sir Patrick was the friend, the counsellor, and supporter of King William—he arrived with him in England—he shared in his triumph. He was created Lord Polwarth, and appointed Sheriff of Berwickshire; and in 1696, though not a lawyer, but an upright man, he was made Lord Chancellor of Scotland, and created Earl of Marchmont, and Lord of Polwarth, Redbraes, and Greenlaw. He was one of the most ardent promoters of the Union; and with it ceased his political career. In 1710, when the Tories came into power, the

carl being the staunchest Whig in Scotland, he was deprived of the office of Sheriff of Berwickshire, but was reinstated in 1715. His lady being dead, he came to take up his residence in Berwick-upon-Tweed; and there, when the heroic Grizel, who was now a wife and a mother (being married to the son of his unfortunate friend, Mr Bailie of Jerviswoode), came with her children and friends to visit him for the last time, as they danced in the hall, though unable to walk, he desired to be carried into the midst of them, and, beating time with his foot—

“See, Grizel,” exclaimed the old patriot, “though your father is unable to dance, he can still beat time with his foot.”

Shortly after this, he died in Berwick, on the 1st of August, 1724, in the eighty-third year of his age—leaving behind him an example of piety, courage, and patriotism, worthy the imitation of posterity.

THE SERJEANT'S TALES.

THE PACKMAN'S JOURNEY TO LONDON.

AT the next opportunity, I got Serjeant Square to resume the narrative of his adventures.

No feeling that the human mind is called upon to sustain (said he) is more depressing than the consciousness of being alone in a strange place without friend or acquaintance—the populous city and the desert are alike lonely. I have been, in the wildernesses of America and in London, the victim of this saddening sensation, and felt it perhaps less keenly when a solitary wanderer in the trackless wilds; for there bodily exertion, and the hopes of soon being in the haunts of men, deadened its force; while, in the populous city, I felt as if I had, after severe suffering and toil, attained an object to me worse than worthless. Amidst the densest crowds, after all, a man can only feel himself truly alone when no hand is held out to him, no eye beams the glance of recognition, and all is strange as a dream. Such were my feelings on the morning after my arrival in Berwick, on my way to London on foot. Fortune had been adverse to me in my native city, Edinburgh—in truth, I had hitherto been her plaything; and, even now, had no definite object in view. Tired of my walk, I had agreed with the captain of a trader for my passage by sea, for the remainder of my journey; and lay upon my bed, awaiting the morning light, a prey to my feelings, and musing upon my chequered fortunes. The wind began gradually to rise and mourn sadly through the windows and in the chimney of the room where I lay. As the morning advanced, the storm increased and raged, so that no vessel could put to sea. After walk-

ing down to the harbour, I returned back to my inn, half resolved not to proceed to the south, but return to Leith in a vessel that was also ready to sail, loaded with grain. I felt myself as if I had been a child, without a will of my own, not caring what became of me. Had I been seized with a mortal disease, I would, I thought, have welcomed death as a relief; so completely had my spirits, somehow or other, become depressed. How I escaped the pressgang, I have often wondered since; for they were very diligent in impressing seamen at this time, and I was in seamen's clothes. Perhaps the fearless manner in which I walked about had led them and the informers to suppose that I had a protection, or was belonging to some ship, and at large on leave of absence.

After breakfast, as I sat conversing with one of the captains about the weather and other trivial matters, a person entered the room with a pack upon his back, and inquired if any of the gentlemen would be so kind as look over his assortment of goods; strongly recommending some silk handkerchiefs.

"No," said the person with whom I was conversing, gruffly. "I want none of your goods. You packmen are all swindling knaves."

"Not all knaves, my good sir. There are knaves in all trades, I allow; but there are honest men, too." And, addressing himself to me, he repeated his request.

His voice at first had sounded in my ears like some well-known sound, and roused my attention; but in vain I endeavoured to call to mind where I had heard it. I had not yet looked towards him; but the instant I did, a mutual recognition took place. He set his pack upon one of the tables of the tap-room. Our hands were clasped in each other's. "Square!" and "Wilson!" were uttered with mutual feelings of joy and surprise. I had met a companion of my early days and sufferings. Often had we spent the

long and chilling winter nights, huddled together to keep each other warm, in the snuggest corner we could find; hungry and ill clothed, often had we shared the precarious morsel of charity with each other, when either could have devoured it all. We had not met since I had first left Edinburgh, many years before; and, if a tear was shed for my mysterious disappearance, it was by Bill Wilson. A glow of pleasure, such as I had never felt before, thawed the icy feeling that had chilled my mind. How delightful must some of the stronger affections be, when the meeting of an early associate can cause so much pleasure! We stood gazing in silence upon each other for some time, ere we could find words to express our feelings. At length they were poured forth in congratulations and kind inquiries. To be alone, we retired to my bedroom, where I gave him a full account of all that had befallen me since we last met, and the present unsettled state of my resolves. He heard me with varying interest, until I had concluded.

“Square,” said he, “you have been sorely knocked about, a passive agent, without an object, save to enjoy or suffer the present hour. Now, to succeed, we must have an aim, and hold it in sight, whatever may befall; even should it often elude our grasp, we must not despair or relinquish it for another. My wish is an old age of independence. I may die this night, or I may live until old age has long impaired my energies. To obtain this, my wish, I have, from circumstances, chosen my present calling; nor have I allowed the most adverse fortune to shake my resolve, or change my method of recovering it; for perseverance is the only road that leads to success. Fortune placed you in America at your outset in life. You forsook the path others have trod in with success. You prospered at sea, and threw the golden opportunity away for a whim; a third time you were placed in fortune’s way; a dark cloud passed over it; you

gave way to your feelings, and are once more, with years of lost time, where you commenced."

As he spoke, a feeling anything but gratifying passed over my mind. I felt that what he said was strictly true; that I had been living, until now, without an aim, either of avarice or ambition—my thoughts never having extended to the future, nor a care for to-morrow having ever occupied my mind. His cares, again, were all for to-morrow. This difference could not have arisen from education; for in this we were both alike. He, in short, had more prudence. But to proceed. I requested him to give me an account of the manner in which he had lived since we had been separated.

"You know, John," he began, "that we were twins in adversity upon the streets of Edinburgh, equally friendless and penniless. After your departure, I felt for a few days very sad and lonely. I sought you everywhere in vain, and made every inquiry; but who cared aught about a homeless beggar-boy? Had a dog as strangely disappeared, the public crier would have proclaimed him through the streets. I began, young as I was, seriously to reflect upon my desolate situation, and plan in my mind ways to mend it. The childish wishes we had often formed of being rich, and the happy dreams of what we would do if we were so, rose with tenfold force into my memory, and I resolved to be rich; but how to attain my aim was the rub. Wishing, I knew well, brought no gain. It must be toiled for, and steadily pursued. A tradesman I could not hope to be. No one would receive me for my labour during my apprenticeship, and clothe and feed me; and I was too young and weak for labouring work in town or country. There was one way alone open to me—to commence merchant. You may smile at the word; but you shall see. It was not my choice; but what have the poor to do with choice? My object now was to obtain a capital to commence business upon. I was far

from fortunate. It was nearly a month before I had accumulated a groat; yet my labour and anxiety were intense. No gentleman appeared on horseback in the city, whom I did not follow, in anxious hopes to get, by holding his horse, a penny, to increase my capital. In messages I was more indefatigable than usual. No length of space or weight of load daunted me, if a penny was to be earned; but it appeared to my eager mind that the gentlemen, at this time, required less service than usual, and those that employed me were more liberal of their food than halfpence. Still I steadily held on unflinching, adding halfpenny to halfpenny, my mind a prey to a new fear, that of losing my treasure. But I had joys mixed with my fears; for, when I retired to a quiet corner, and counted again and again my increasing store, what a pleasure I felt in adding a halfpenny to it, and carefully wrapping up the paper! When I had reached my eightpence, I could delay my undertaking no longer. I felt I had attained my first step; and, with a feeling of importance to be envied, proceeded to a bookseller's shop, and purchased ballads, of which I got, for my groat, one dozen and three, with a piece of paper to wrap them in, and left the shop, exulting that I was now a merchant, and had goods to dispose of.

“As it was not my intention to sing them on the streets—for from this my pride revolted—I set off in the direction of Lasswade, calling at every door to offer my wares. In two days I had sold off my whole stock, and returned to town for more ballads. After a time, I added other small books, and my trade prospered amazingly. My living cost me nothing; my voice was good, and a supper and bed to the pedlar-boy, were the purchase of my songs, at the cottar's or the farmer's ingle. During the first year my two groats had grown to nearly a pound, and my ambition had grown with it. Pins, tapes, and thread were added to my store; my excursions were extended, and Bill Wilson was a known and

a welcome guest over the whole county of Mid-Lothian. My toil was great, but my strength seemed to increase with my load. I had now in view my second step in advance, a horse and cart to carry my load. Years had passed on; my pack, worth twenty pounds, was all my own, and I had two pounds in my pocket; it was far on in the year, and the day was short and louring. I had some goods bespoke for a bridal, which required to be delivered on the following day. My route lay over the Soutra Hill; and had the weather kept up, my task was easy of accomplishment — so I cheerily plodded on, counting my gains; but scarce had I reached the ascent, when the wind began to moan along the dreary waste, and thin flakes of snow to fall, while the blast, from the east, blew right in my face. I quickened my pace; but the storm increased before I reached the top, the drifting snow blinding me, and the fitful gusts almost lifting me off my feet. Cold and biting as was the air, I was wet with perspiration, from my load and my struggles against the blast. I could not see two yards before me; I was truly alone in the howling waste, yet I yielded not to despondency, but struggled on for life. I had, it seemed, deviated from the road, for all was now a trackless waste, when suddenly I stumbled and fell on the edge of a declivity, and my pack, the whole of my wealth, bounded from me, in what direction I knew not. It was vain to look for it in such a situation, in such a storm; but what is wealth under such circumstances, when life is scarcely to be hoped for?

“When I recovered my feet, I was bruised, and began to chill. Hope of escape had nearly fled; despondency was stealing fast upon me; but life is sweet, and so I urged on, as much to overcome the intense cold I felt, as with any hope of finding a shelter from the pitiless storm. The magnitude of my loss never once entered my mind in this struggle for existence. I would have given all the remainder of my hard earnings for the sight of a cottage, in which

to preserve my life. In this, my hour of need, I was snatched from death. As I stood, unable to move a step farther, and on the point of sinking upon the snow, to rise no more, the sound of a dog, barking loudly, fell upon my ear. There was life in the welcome sound; and, with an energy I had felt myself incapable of a minute before, I started off towards the spot from whence the sounds proceeded, calling at intervals with all my strength, and listening as the barking of the dog became more and more distinct. At length I could perceive the light shine dimly through the drifting snow, from a cottage window, which, having reached, I entered, almost exhausted. I was kindly received by the humane inmates, to whom I told my piteous tale. The storm still howled without. The good woman made for me a shake-down upon the floor, close by the fire, whereon to pass the night. After my benumbed limbs were restored to animation, the good man of the house took the book, and, after the worship, in which I joined with a fervour I had never felt before, we all retired to rest, the family speaking all the comfort to me their feeling hearts could dictate, and promising to rise before dawn, to assist in searching for my pack. All was still within; but the storm raged with unabated violence without, and for hours sleep forsook my pillow. I was tormented with heat; pains shot through my frame, and before the dawn I was in a raging fever, and unable to rise. The good people of the house were sore distressed. I gave them the best information I could where to search for my pack; but it was very vague, for I knew not myself the spot where it had bounded from me, and I was at this time two long Scotch miles from the Soutra Hill, and one mile off the highway. The storm of the preceding evening had been followed by a partial thaw after daybreak; but all, save where the wind had blown the snow from the heights, lay a trackless waste. Far on in the day the searchers returned from their fruit-

less labours, fatigued and hungry. I was myself much worse; no doctor was to be had nearer than Haddington, neither was there accommodation for me in the house. Ill as I was, I had no choice. A horse and cart were, at my request, procured, and, carefully wrapped up, I was conveyed to Haddington. What followed for some days I know not. I will hurry on. I would not have been so minute, were it not to show you that there are shipwrecks and disasters on land as well as at sea.

“When I recovered my consciousness, I found myself in an obscure garret, the dwelling of a lone and pious widow, who had taken into her house the sick stranger, when all else had refused. I had occupied her only bed, while she passed her nights, seated by her scanty fire, and nursed me in my delirium and fever. The good doctor had attended me as assiduously as if I had been his own son, and aided the widow in supporting me. The snow had been all off the ground for many days; and whoever had found my store had kept it concealed, for I never heard of it. I was once again penniless, and worse than I was at the commencement; for I was indebted to my kind landlady and the doctor. My two guineas and seven shillings were still in my pocket untouched; for the pious widow had, even in her straits, on my account held them sacred, and they knew from the people who brought me of my ruinous misfortune. When I became able to move about, I besought them to accept of even one of the guineas as a remuneration; but their answer was, they would give me credit until I was enabled to pay them in full—and, thank God, I have done this long ago.

“It was well up in February before I could resume my toils. Disheartening as my misfortune had been, my ultimate object, and the means of attaining it, I had never for one moment allowed to pass from my mind. It was now that the reward of honesty and fair dealing was felt by me,

and proved of immense advantage in enabling me to recover my loss. There was not a merchant with whom I had ever dealed, who did not offer me his goods in trust, to what amount I chose; but to avoid debt has ever been my maxim, and I took no more than my finances would allow. I had only a smaller assortment, and returned the sooner. I was astonished at the rapidity of my own sales—for all had heard of my misfortunes, and pitied me; and, if I was expected, no other packman had any chance. What was required, if not in my pack, I got orders for, and brought at the appointed time. From that day to this, everything has prospered with me. I have attained my second step, and am now on my way to London, and other towns, to purchase goods, and a horse and cart. To cover my expenses, I am doing a little business by the way. An extensive shop, and at length a competency, are, I trust, not far distant."

By mid-day, the gale of wind had considerably abated; the tide being in the evening, the vessels could not depart. We sat chatting together. The perseverance and success of my companion had made a deep impression on me. I began to think that I might do worse than follow his example; for I had never left my country through choice.

"Wilson," said I, "do you think I could be converted into a packman? I care not what I do for an honest livelihood. I have often heard that an old packman makes a good merchant—I am willing to try if an old merchant can make a good packman. I have a few guineas to purchase goods with. If you will tell me what are the proper kinds, we will go together, by sea, to London, where you are going, and make our purchases: are you agreed?"

"No! Square, no! I will never agree to trust myself upon the fickle element, when there is no occasion for it, besides manifest loss. With what goods are in my pack, I will travel free to London, and put a pound in my pocket,

at least. If you have any thought of turning to my profession, you must study economy and a placid temper—‘take the bit and the buffet with it.’ I have not a doubt you may succeed, if you stick to it in earnest; and I have no objection to give you all the information I can, before we part.”

I myself had, indeed, no other motive for going by sea to London, than to avoid the fatigue and get quickly there; so it was agreed that I should proceed with him, and learn from his experience. My sailor’s dress was sold, and one similar to his own purchased; and, while this was being done, he told me that he had upon his person, carefully concealed, an order from the Royal Bank of Scotland, upon the Bank of England, for one hundred and sixty guineas, which he had doubly secured. It was, he said, not indorsed, nor would he indorse it, until he was obtaining the cash. “There are such things as robberies,” he said, “and much worse. I have left a letter and instructions at the bank, and with Widow Craig, who nursed me in my sickness (we have been as mother and son since then), that, if my order is not called for within twelve months, she is to give my letter to the worthy doctor, who will receive the amount, and administer to the widow’s comforts. What remains at her death, I cheerfully bequeath to him. You may smile at this; but our trade is one not without danger even in Scotland; and in England, where highwaymen and footpads are plenty, we travel with our lives in our hands.”

Before the evening closed, I was all ready to start upon my new line of life. As Berwick, he said, was not a proper place to lay in a store of goods to sell again with a sufficient profit, I purchased only a few pounds’ worth of hardware, Wilson being so kind as sell me, at cost, one dozen of Barcelona silk handkerchiefs, of which he had a great supply, and which he esteemed as valuable and light of carri-

age. The remainder of my cash he made me take out of my purse, saying that none but those who knew not the value of money carried it in purses. It was as if the owner had collected it for the first who chose to put his hand in his pocket, or for a vain display.

"Square," said he, "if you had a thousand guineas in your pocket, among strangers never show or say you have a coin in gold. Tempt no man to evil. The poor travel safe, when the rich are in peril. Allow me to place your guineas in the bank."

He then opened the lining of the waistband of my small-clothes, and stitched them in so dexterously, that no one could have thought there was coin there.

"Now," says he, "we are all ready to start for London on the morning. The way is long, and our burdens heavy; but they will get lighter as we move along. Our lodging for to-morrow night is Belford. I shall manage so that we shall reach it before dark. The direct distance is only fifteen miles; but we may travel thirty in quest of customers. You are not now, as you were a few months since, to expect that customers will come to you—the pack is a travelling counter, and must move about."

Next morning, after an early breakfast, we crossed the Tweed, and walked on, with our packs slung over our shoulders—the weather cool and pleasing. I felt a buoyancy of spirits I had not experienced for some time; I dreamed waking dreams, and built castles in the air. Wilson sung snatches of songs. I had once more entered on a new walk in life, and begun at the right end, as Wilson said in one of his sage remarks.

"Square, your last misfortune arose from this—you began business at the wrong end; you commenced too soon and too full. No man can manage money well who knows not, by earning, the value of it. Be prudent—be cunning, too, if you please; but use not your cunning to wrong any one

—a shilling won by fraud is a pound of loss. I have known many since I began who have hastened to be rich in that way; but they have all failed in their attempts. Those who once dealt would never deal with them again; their means of success became every journey more circumscribed. Here is a farm-steading—we must try how we are to succeed on the south of the Tweed.”

I will not weary you with our hawking adventures. We progressed on our journey with various success, but constantly with gain, our packs lightening apace; I liking the profession very ill. I loved not money sufficiently to bend my mind to the slights and insults we were often forced to endure. Upon Wilson they had no effect in ruffling his temper. He would smile, and, with a slyness of humour, turn their bitterest taunts against the taunters, or banter them into good-humour, and effect a sale. He would, indeed, be as good-humoured under insult as if he had been civilly treated; while I was on the eve of bursting into a rage, and either looking sulky or returning taunt for taunt. Indeed, before we reached Northallerton, I had made up my mind to relinquish my new calling as soon as we got to London; and told Wilson so. He shook his head.

“John Square, you are one of those who, for want of firmness, never get on in the world. When there is an object to gain, we must not be scared from it by trifles, or neglect an honest mean that leads to success. You have commenced at the hardest part of a packman's life—his journey in England. But, ho! here is Northallerton. Tomorrow we will strike off the eastern road, and go to York. I expect to see some acquaintances there.”

Thus we journeyed on, I more through a dogged stubbornness not to yield, than any love I had for the mode of life I had chosen, until we were a few miles from York, where we overtook a brother of the trade. As soon as he came in sight, Wilson said—

“There is Simon Hepburn, the Praying Packman, as the profane call him, or Pious Simon, his more befitting name; for he really is a good, well-meaning man. I have known him for some years, neither richer nor poorer; his pack or cash seldom exceeds twenty pounds, yet he could easily increase his store, if he had ambition; but that he wants; and his gains are always spent upon objects of charity or piety. He is never without Bibles or pious books, which he bestows, in free gift, where he thinks they may be of use; he has only particular houses where he stops, and he is always a welcome guest, superseding the goodman of the house, for the time, in the Christian office of a teacher. The most pleasing and edifying evenings I have ever spent were with him. When he is in Haddington, Widow Craig’s is his home; and, although we are two of a trade, happy am I when we meet. You shall judge for yourself. His history is a most singular one, and nothing gives him more pleasure than to relate it. Let him speak for himself.”

We quickened our pace, and soon overtook him. He was a man, to all appearance, above sixty years of age; his hair was white as snow, with a shade of care at times upon his regular features, that flitted off, and was succeeded by a gleam of internal satisfaction. The smoothness of his brow, and the fulness of his features, bore an unusual contrast to the whiteness of his locks, the appearance of age and youth being strangely combined, while his whole appearance was winning in the extreme. When we came up to him, Bill said—

“Simon, I am happy to have met you; how come you on?”

“Far beyond my deserts,” said he. “How are you? and how did you leave my worthy friend the widow?”

“In good health,” said Bill; “I thank you. I have been just talking of you to my friend Square here, who would feel obliged were you to give him an outline of your strange history, as we walk on to York.”

“Certainly, Bill, certainly; it may be of use to him. He is a new beginner in his present craft, as I was when the events happened that I am going to relate.

“The changes that occur both in nations and families,” said Simon, “are soon felt by the individuals. Lawsuits and bad management had reduced the once extensive patrimony of our family to a small farm. At my grandfather’s death, my father, who had married, as his father thought, far beneath him, had three sons. My oldest brother, before he succeeded, went to Holland, having got a commission in the Scottish brigade; the second attended the farm, at which I assisted until I was about eighteen. I grew weary of farming, and resolved to become a merchant. I was induced to this by the success of several who had left our neighbourhood, done well after a few years’ travel as packmen, and were then settled in various towns, and prosperous. It was in the beginning of May, as soon as the weather became settled, that I left the neighbourhood of Annan, with a few pounds, on my way to Dumfries, and thence to Edinburgh; my object being to furnish my pack. I had a relation of my mother’s, a wholesale merchant, in the first town, who had promised to do all in his power for me, as far as advice and a few articles would go. Cheerful and full of hope, I strode along, till, within about two miles from Dumfries, I overtook a young and interesting female, accompanied by a young man. We entered into conversation as we walked along. She appeared sad, and often sighed; while he was taciturn, and appeared to avoid conversation. When within a few hundred yards of the town, they stopped behind for a minute or so, and then, the man leaving her, she overtook me, and we entered the town together. I learned from her that she was on her way to Edinburgh, and, having a brother married in Dumfries, she was going to his house for some articles belonging to her, and her fellow-traveller was to meet her there.

“Anxious to commence my new mode of life, I had soon completed my business with my friend. He was standing at the door when I came up with the young woman, and, laughing, inquired if she was my sweetheart or wife. In the course of two or three hours, I was again upon the road towards Moffat, on my way to Edinburgh, with my light pack upon my back, as happy as a king. As I passed the side of a young plantation that skirted the road, a few miles from Dumfries, I saw, lying on the side of the way, a small bundle, tied in a silk handkerchief. I immediately picked it up; and, after standing a few minutes, and looking around to see if any one was in sight who might have dropped it, I called aloud, but there was no answer. I continued my pace, rejoicing in my good fortune. At about a quarter-of-a-mile from the spot, there was a public-house, into which I entered, for a little refreshment, and to inquire if they would purchase anything I could supply them. I placed the bundle I had picked up and my pack upon the table, got what I asked for, and then inquired if they would purchase. During my stay, two farm-servants came in; and, when I was about to depart, they, seeing me lift the bundle from the table, inquired if it was my own. I hesitated for a moment, and, unfortunately, said that it was. They looked at each other; no more passed, and I resumed my journey towards Moffat, which I was anxious to reach before nightfall. I accomplished it; and, stopping at a cheap lodging-house, had an early supper, and went soon to bed, weary with my day’s walk.

“Scarce had I fallen asleep, when I was aroused by a loud knocking at the door, and the sound of many voices. Before I was fully awake, I was seized in my bed, and my hands bound tightly together. My terror became extreme—I shook in every limb. In vain I strove to speak, and inquire what all this meant. I could only see that every eye was bent on me with an expression of horror and rage.

My clothes were searched, and then forced upon me. I was not allowed to assist myself—my hands were unbound to get on my coat; but a man held each arm while another pulled. They seemed afraid I would do something desperate, and were as coarse and cautious as if I had been a ferocious animal; yet I was passive from excess of fear; and, although numbers were speaking, I was in such a state that I could not collect the purport of their conversation. Exclamations sounded in my ears above the confusion of voices, and the first sentence I made out was spoken by my landlady:—‘Oh, the bloody-minded young wretch!’ she cried. ‘Who would have thought it, to look at him? But I hope they will hang him as high as Haman. And, after all, to come into a lone widow’s house to bring disgrace on it. Take him away, sirs, as quick as you can, or I shall be an undone woman, and my character entirely lost.’

“Astonished at what the woman said, I inquired what offence I had committed—or where. O God! what was my horror to learn that I was charged with murder!—that the bundle in my possession had been the property of the victim of some ruthless villain—and that I was taken for him! In vain I protested my innocence. The two men were present to whom I had said, when they inquired, that the bundle was my own. I was thus, by my own confession—if not a murderer—a convicted liar. No one, for a moment, thought me innocent. So strong was their conviction of my guilt, that had the laws not deterred them, they would have rejoiced to have put me to death on the spot. Even this would have been kindness, in a worldly sense, to what I was doomed to suffer.

“It was nearly eleven o’clock at night, but clear and bright; the moon was nearly full; the air a little sharp, but not cold, when I was placed, bound hand and foot, in a cart, and accompanied by the two men and two officers. I thought my heart would have burst. I opened not my

mouth to speak in answer to their questions, cruel taunts, and upbraidings. I saw I was an object of horror and loathing to them—and deservedly so, had I been the guilty creature they had cause to think me. I passed the melancholy time we were upon the road in tears, and prayers that my innocence might be made manifest; but I knew not yet the extent of my misery. At length the cart stopped at the door of the public-house; my feet were loosened, and I was desired to come down, and enter the same room where I had been in the afternoon. A crowd of horrorstricken people were huddled round the fireplace. In the wooden bed lay an object, covered with a white sheet, resembling a human body. I had never seen a corpse laid out in my life; yet the idea rushed upon my mind that this was one; and my blood curdled in my veins, as the conviction came over me that it was one that had met its fate by violence. I trembled, while the large drops of sweat stood upon my brow. All eyes were turned to me; a grim smile of malicious satisfaction was on the faces of some, while horror and pity were equally strongly marked upon the countenances of others. My natural feelings were, to all present, a sure indication of my guilt. I would have sunk to the ground had not the two men supported me. My head fell upon my breast. I requested a little water, in a voice scarcely audible. It was given me, and the sickness went off. One of the officers then, taking a lamp, went to the bed, and removed the sheet from the body. My eyes involuntarily followed him; a cry of horror escaped my lips; and I felt my muscles become rigid. Before me lay the body of the female I had parted with in health early in the forenoon, at the shop-door of my relation, shockingly mangled, her long fair hair clotted with blood, and her mild blue eyes, that had smiled upon me, dulled by the shade of death. I could only groan. My sufferings at this sight were beyond utterance. All in the room moved to the bed, and placed their hands upon the

bosom of the dead, and protested their innocence. I was ordered to do the same; but I could not summon resolution to touch the body. My whole nature revolted from the contact.

“‘I am innocent!’ I cried; ‘God knows I am innocent! I know nothing of this foul murder. Ask me to cut off my hand, or place it in the burning fire, among the live coals; but ask me not to touch that bloody body, for pity’s sake!’

“My appeals were vain; they only served to confirm the prepossessions of my hearers that I was guilty. As I stood, shrinking from the fearful object as far as those who held me would permit, a cry arose that I was the murderer beyond a doubt, and that I should be compelled to touch the body. One of the officers seized my hand; those who held me pushed me towards the bed; I struggled in vain; my hand was held fast as I was forced along; and the consequence was, that it came with force upon the chest of the murdered victim, when a gurgling sound issued from the gaping wound. I became insensible.

“When my faculties returned, it was the grey of the morning. We were entering the town of Dumfries; I in the cart, and the murdered body by my side. I was lodged in the jail—a criminal already condemned in the eyes of my fellow-men. Even the felons and debtors in prison avoided my society. At my examination before the sheriff, I trembled at the array of circumstantial evidence that was brought against me. My own relation admitted that he had seen us together at his shop-door. The young woman had gone from thence to her brother’s, and staid only a short time—telling them she was on her way to Edinburgh, and was to meet a young man, who was to accompany her there. She had been seen by the two men lingering upon the Mof-fat road, near the planting, a short time before, with the same bundle in her hand that I had said was mine when

they saw me in the public-house with it in my possession. They had thought it strange, but paid no attention until the body of the young woman was discovered in the wood a few hours after, and still warm. I had been pursued, and the property proved to belong to the victim of my cruelty. My terror at being apprehended, and my refusal to touch the dead body, all militated against me. I was fully committed as the murderer, without hope of escape, innocent as I was of the crime. To this damning evidence, all I had to advance was my unheeded assertion of my innocence.

“From the beginning of May until the month of September I lay in jail—a stranger to comfort of any kind. Every anguish was mine, except remorse. I was looked upon by all, except my parents, as the most hardened villain on earth. No one doubted my guilt, except my parents; and it was only their parental feelings that made them doubt and pray that, if innocent, the really guilty might be discovered. I will not attempt to describe the scenes between me and my parents. They both wished that the grave might hide their shame before the fatal day of the execution of their son; for all chance of proving my innocence seemed out of the question. The worthy minister that visited the jail firmly believed in my guilt; to all my solemn asseverations of innocence, he only replied by holding forth on the dangers of hardened crime, with earnest exhortations for me to confess and make atonement as far as was in my power. He would for hours lay before me the horrors of appearing before my Maker with a lie in my mouth. My pride was wounded by the good man’s well-meant efforts. I began to avoid him as much as possible; and, when I could not, I was silent and sullen. This, also, was held to be a sure token of my guilt. Alas! I was not hardened; but I was heart-broken. My Bible was my only companion—my soother and support; for I found no threat there but against

the wicked. Its Author was the searcher of hearts. In it I found I was really guilty of many crimes which my fellow-men thought nothing of; but there I also found a Saviour and Mediator. My mind became humbled and composed; and, while I still solemnly asserted my innocence of the murder, I did it with temper and meekness.

“ ‘Worthy sir,’ I said to the clergyman, ‘appearances have deceived you. If it is the will of God that the innocent should suffer, for some wise purpose, his will be done. If it is not so, my guiltlessness of blood will be made evident in this world—at least I shall be declared innocent on that great day when all shall render their account—in this matter, innocent, save of the guilty falsehood I stated, that the unfortunate female’s bundle was my own. Alas! I wished not to keep the property from the rightful owner. My thought at the time was, that, if I owned that I had found it, they would take it from me, or make a disturbance about it. Had they only said a few words more, I had told the truth; and thus, probably, have contributed to the proof of my innocence.’

“At length, the Lords of Justiciary entered the town. None but those who are within the walls of a jail, awaiting their arrival, can conceive the dread sensation of fear and hope awakened in the breasts of criminals by the clang of the trumpets and shouting of the mob, as the pageant proceeds through the streets. How bitter are the feelings produced by the joyous shouts of the thoughtless people! forgetful, or heedless, of the fates of their fellow-mortals. Next day I was led into the court, more dead than alive. My head became giddy. Everything before me—the crowded court, the judges, jury, and officers—became a confused mass; a murmur as if of horror sounded in my ears from the assembled multitude; the fatal bundle lay upon the table before me. At length all was ready; and, the indictment having been read aloud by the clerk, the judge, in a solemn

voice, asked if I was guilty or not. After a gasp or two for breath—

“‘O my lord!’ I said, ‘I am as guiltless of this crime as the unborn babe. Have mercy on me!’ And I sank upon the table before me, overpowered.

“The public prosecutor then opened the case, and harrowed up my soul with the fearful account of the diabolical deed. He almost persuaded me I was the murderer; so clearly did he reason from appearances. The witnesses were called; a chain of circumstantial evidence was made out; all that was wanting in it was, that I had not been seen to do the deed. Witnesses I had not one. Those whom I could have called could have said nothing but what they had already said, and it was wrested to my disadvantage by my own story; for I was a self-convicted liar, and little better than a thief, in my attempt to appropriate what was not my own—even in the most favourable construction my able counsel could put upon my case. The jury, without leaving their box, pronounced me guilty, without a dissentient voice. The judge put on the fearful black hat upon his head; and, after a heart-harrowing speech upon my guilt, pronounced sentence of death upon me. I was to be taken back to the jail, and from thence to the spot where the murder had been committed, and hung in chains on the second market-day in October. How I was removed from the court I cannot tell; neither can I tell what intervened for some hours. The last thing strongly impressed upon my memory is a burst of satisfaction in the court, when the sentence was passed upon me, and the hooting of the crowd without; yet, strange to say, I slept soundly after the irons were riveted upon my ankles, and awoke to find my doom fixed, and my days on earth numbered. I became, in a manner, resigned to my fate. Indeed, save for my parents, I had no other regret in leaving the world; yet, at times, an anxious wish would steal upon my mind that I might be saved from my unme-

rited death. It was the shuddering of nature at entering upon eternity. The hope never left me that my innocence would, at one time or another, sooner or later, be made manifest to my fellow-men—for murder will not hide, nor innocent blood cry from the earth in vain. The hours flew past with fearful rapidity; the neighbouring clock seemed never to cease to strike the hour. Night followed day, and day night, as if there was no interval between; yet there was a heaviness upon me that bowed me down. My last Sabbath on earth arrived; the day was spent in devotion—my heart-broken parents, who now were convinced of my innocence, pouring out their souls with mine to the Throne of Grace. If ever there was on earth a foretaste of the joys of heaven, I felt it that day in the condemned cell, loaded with irons. We had taken farewell of each other, in the full assurance of soon meeting where there is no sorrow or shame. The bitterness of death was past. My thoughts were no longer of this world.

“The Monday passed on. There was but one whole day more for me on the earth. Wednesday was to be my last. On the morning of Tuesday, as soon as the jail was opened, my brother, who had always thought hardly of me, and visited me only twice, rushed into my cell, and, weeping, fell upon my bosom. After a few minutes, he sobbed—

“‘My brother! Simon, my brother! can you forgive me for thinking so hardly of you?’

“‘My brother,’ I replied, ‘I have ever thought of you in grief and pity, never in anger. My heart blesses you for this kindness.’

“‘You are innocent, my own Simon! You are cleared of this crime. All is made manifest. The worthy minister is at present with the provost, who will write to the sheriff to delay the fatal day, until your pardon come.’

“I heard no more: a faintness came over me; my heart ceased to beat, and all consciousness left me for some time.

When I recovered, we fell upon our knees, and poured out our souls in thanksgivings. At that time I dedicated the whole remainder of my days to the service of that merciful God who had made clear my innocence, and spared my parents and friends from shame.

“When we had become composed, I learned from him the wonderful manner in which my innocence had been discovered, and the guilty punished by the hand of the sufferer’s own brother. She had resided in the parish of Caerlaverock, with a brother, a widower, as his house-keeper, for some years; and it had been understood that she was soon to marry a young man, a stranger, who had come some years before into the parish. He was on intimate terms with her brother; but her other friends did not approve of the connection, as his character was none of the best. Her brother was of a thoughtless, jovial disposition, and saw no harm in him, for he was an excellent boon-companion, and they were thus inseparable on all occasions of festivity. On the Saturday afternoon before the day appointed for my execution, they had gone out with their guns to shoot for amusement. Both had been drinking pretty hard; and it was observed that the stranger had for some time almost entirely given himself up to intoxication, especially since the death of Grace, his sweetheart. This was attributed to his grief, and begat pity for him, and no one was more assiduous in endeavouring to cheer his gloom than her brother. After their search for game, they were returning to the village, when, by some accident, the gun which Grace’s brother carried went off, and lodged its contents in the body of his companion, who fell, dreadfully wounded. A surgeon was sent for, who gave little hopes of his recovery. No blame could be attached to his companion, as the accident was seen by several, and the grief of Grace’s brother was excessive. On the Sabbath, the stranger was much worse. His mind seemed to suffer more than his body; and

words of fearful import escaped from him at intervals, which harrowed up the souls of those who attended him. Cries of despair, mixed with horrid imprecations, burst from his lips. Yet death evidently was approaching fast to seize his victim. When they spoke of sending for the minister to pray with and console him, he blasphemed, and thus spent he his last Sabbath on earth. Through the night he fell into a troubled sleep, and began to mutter. Gradually his words became more distinct. He talked of Grace, and recounted her murder as he had perpetrated it; writhed in remorse, and called for mercy from my injured spirit, as if I had already suffered. As soon as the morning dawned, the minister was sent for, and what the guilty man had said in his sleep recounted to him. He was now very low; the hand of death was on him; and, for some time, he was deaf to the remonstrances of the divine. But at length he confessed all; told that they would find the knife with which he had done the fearful crime buried at the back of the cottage where he lay. All was written down by the minister. The knife was found, stained with the blood of his victim. I was now as much the object of pity as I had been of hatred and horror. That day my irons were struck off; I had the freedom of the jail until my pardon arrived, and was visited by numbers of the inhabitants, who loaded me with presents. But my feelings of gratitude were principally awakened on my parents' account, for the joy it imparted to them. Many, many years have passed since that event, but it is ever present with me, and spurs me on in my labours of love, in comforting and winning souls to God."

So deeply had I been interested in the narrative of the Pious Pedlar, that we had reached York, and stood at the door of the Duke of Marlborough public-house, before I was aware of the distance we had walked after he commenced. As this was the house where Bill and a number of others in his line were in the habit of staying during the

time they were in the town, we entered, and found two or three, who, like ourselves, had come to purchase goods. I was astonished at the haughty manner in which they returned our salutation. The landlord, who seemed to know all his guests well, received William and Simon with a hearty welcome; and, shaking me by the hand, wished me success in my new calling, expressing his hope that I would find everything in the Marlborough to my liking. We were then ushered into a small room, where dinner was to be served to us. When we were comfortably seated, I remarked to Bill the impression the lofty bearing of the others had made upon me, and inquired if he knew the cause. He laughed—

“Quite well,” said he; “there is an aristocracy among pedlars as well as other callings. They belong to the waggons, and would think it a degradation to associate with us bearers. We are a grade beneath them; besides, the waggons are, for the most part, gentlemen by birth—the younger cadets of decayed houses of long standing. With a little capital to commence with, they never dealt in small quantities, their line lying in supplying the retailers in distant towns, and many of them are very wealthy. Upon my return from London, when I have purchased my horse and waggon, I will be entitled to rank with them, but will never be treated as the equal of those who have both birth and waggons; nevertheless, I will be a waggoner until I commence business in my own shop, when I will be a grade higher than even waggoner; and, with economy and my usual perseverance, I may be a bailie, or even provost, of the town I settle in. Only think of that, John Square! Stick to your present occupation, and, without trusting the stormy ocean, you may, by following my counsel, succeed as well as I or any one.”

“My young friend,” said the pious Simon, “all these are good in subjection; but a higher aim ought to be

your guide through life; for all these give not peace to the soul."

While he spoke, we were joined by other two of our own rank, to whom my two companions were barely civil, and very distant. Both were well advanced in years, with a forward cast of countenance and a look of low cunning strangely blended, which they endeavoured to make pass for frankness. Having settled our small bill, and left our packs in charge of the landlord, I walked out to see the minster, they to transact some business of their own.

I returned when the shades of evening fell, and found that Wilson and Simon had arrived some time before me, and were seated by themselves. There were several others in the room in general conversation, in which we took no part. The two whom I had left before I went out were still in the same position, evidently under the influence of liquor. They were clearly unwelcome; their conversation was only calculated to beget disgust in well-regulated minds, consisting of anecdotes of fraud and imposition, of which they seemed proud of being the heroes.

"These two," said Simon to me, "are a specimen of those who bring disrepute upon any callings, and much more so on ours. They are not without talents, but they cultivate them to unprofitable ends. I have known them for many years; and, with all their boasted cunning, they are, I believe, poorer at this moment than they were when I first knew them, and must still become poorer, for their character is gone. The public fear to deal with them, and will not do it, even when they would act honestly. They are forced to range far, to places where they are unknown; and even there they are every year circumscribing and planting thorns for others to walk over. They, besides, are ever under the fear of injury from some one or other whom they have defrauded. Such are the fruits of dishonest dealing."

All our business being transacted, it was agreed that we

should continue our route for London, to purchase silks and light goods, and return by the same route to Scotland. William having purchased a small waggon and horse, together with a small assortment of woollens, my stock remained much the same, and was slung over my shoulder, save when, for ease, and there were no houses on the road, I placed it in the waggon; for I was weary of my pedlar's life, and only endured it until I should reach London. We arrived at Hatfield, about twenty-five miles from London, early in the afternoon, and resolved to stay for the night, as Wilson had hopes of doing some good in the neighbourhood. As for me, I had ceased, much to his chagrin, to attempt any sales, as my pack was now much reduced. While he was gone, I sat at the inn-door, amusing myself in the best manner I could—sometimes musing on my strange fate, at others gazing listlessly upon the passers-by—when a post-chaise drove up to the door at a furious rate. The horses were extremely blown, and covered with perspiration. A gentleman and lady descended from the chaise; she evidently was under restraint, and looked anxiously and fearfully around. Our eyes met; I thought she gave her hand that was disengaged a movement, as if she wished me to come to her. She was in tears. I rose, and moved to approach, but she was hurried into the house before I could advance; for I was in doubt—yet her look expressed what her hand signalled. I thought it strange, for a moment; but this feeling died away, for I might have been deceived. The gentleman came to the door, to hurry the people, as they were rather slow, as he thought, in procuring fresh horses. I good-naturedly went to assist the postilion. As I stood before the chaise, I looked up to one of the windows, and saw the female weeping at it. Our eyes again met; she clasped her hands imploringly, and, taking a small packet, placed it behind the window-shutter, and, raising her clasped hands to heaven, looked earnestly at me. I gave a nod of

assent. She retired from the window. All this had passed quickly as a shadow. In a few minutes they were again in the chaise. As it passed off, I again gave a nod, and a languid smile passed over her face. I entered the house, and inquired of the landlord who they were; but got no information, as he said they were unknown to him. I requested to have a glass of brandy-and-water in the room where the lady had been. As soon as it was brought, and he had retired, I looked behind the window-shutter, and, taking out the parcel, found it to contain a sum of money and a sealed letter, upon the inside of the wrapper of which was written in pencil—"Benevolent stranger, whoever you are, for mercy's sake and all that is dear to you, deliver this as directed, with your utmost despatch, and snatch a fellow-creature from misery. Let this supply your immediate wants, and an ample reward shall follow. Use all despatch, I again implore you."

I was for a few minutes lost in amazement. The letter was addressed to Captain James H——, Strand, London. Could this be my old patron and captain? There was not one moment to lose. I descended to the bar, and told the landlord I must set off for London immediately, and requested his advice how I was to proceed. He told me I must make the journey on horseback, as he had not another pair of horses. I told him that was impossible, as I had never been on horseback in my life, and I could walk it faster and with more ease than I could ride. I would walk on to Barnet before dark, and get a chaise there if I could find none sooner. As I was on the eve of setting off, he found means to procure an old phæton; and, while it was getting ready, I wrote to Wilson that circumstances forced me to London, but that I would perhaps see him in the morning. At all events, I made him heartily welcome to my pack, as I meant to carry it no more, wishing him health and prosperity if we should not meet.

I mounted the high-hung, crazy vehicle, with a lad to drive and bring it back, having satisfied mine host to his utmost wish. By half-past ten o'clock, I reached the jeweller's in the Strand, whose first floor Captain H—— occupied, and found him at home. His lady was also present. His surprise was great at my entering. Our joy was mutual, and only damped by my relating the strange manner in which I had again had the pleasure of seeing him. He broke the letter open, and having hastily perused it, turned to his wife, who sat pale and anxiously looking at him—"My love, I must be off this instant, and endeavour to rescue Catherine from her unpleasant thralldom. Do not be alarmed—there is no danger. During the time I am getting all ready, you may peruse the letter." Saying this, he rung the bell, and ordered his servant to procure a post-chaise as quickly as he could, and send in refreshments for me. Mrs H—— was dissolved in tears, as she had read the letter to an end. When we were again alone, "James," said she, "this proceeding of Master Wilton is very cruel to my cousin; although he is her guardian, he has, I should think, no right to wound her feelings, and hurry her about the country in this mysterious manner. I am fearful he has some reason he is ashamed to confess. My dear James, be careful of yourself for my sake; I shall be miserable until your return."

"There is not the smallest occasion, my love; I shall write you as soon as I arrive at Mr Wilton's. In the morning, you must write a note to Mr Stenton, to call upon you. Show him your cousin's letter, and order him to take what steps he may judge necessary in this affair."

"Can it be possible," said she, "that my aunt approves of this proceeding? He could not have removed Catherine without her consent."

"I shall soon know, my love. The dear girl must not be allowed to suffer from their designs or caprice."

At this moment the chaise was announced to be at the door, and in a short time we were in it, and rattling along towards Barnet, where we changed horses, and were in Hatfield a little after daybreak. During our dark and comfortless ride, I told him all that had befallen me since we parted in Lisbon. He had only been in London a few months, where he had come upon business—an uncle of his wife's having died some time before, leaving the bulk of his fortune to his two neices—Catherine, the young lady whose letter I had brought to London, and his wife. To Catherine, his favourite sister's daughter, he had left, besides an equal sum in cash, all his landed and other property. Mr Wilton's sister, the aunt of both, was a rich widow, but of a morose and finical temper. Catherine had been brought up by her some fifty miles from London, and Mr H—— had no idea until my arrival that she had not been still with her. "I hope there is no foolish love affair in this strange business," said he; "for Catherine is a warm-hearted, susceptible girl. Her father was our countryman, and my intimate friend."

As Mr Wilton's property lay near Baldock, about eighteen miles distant, and no post-horses were to be got, the captain, on horseback, set off alone; I was to follow on foot, which I preferred, to Stevenage, where I was to wait until I heard from him. After a hasty parting from my fellow-traveller Wilson, which was not without regret on both sides, I set off for Stevenage; he saying, as he shook my hand—

"John Square, I hope you will never want, but you will never be rich. You are as unstable as water."

I had only been in the inn at Stevenage a short time, when a servant arrived with a note, informing me that Captain H—— had got all arranged to his satisfaction, and would return to London on the following day, requesting me to hasten thither with a letter for Mrs H——; which I did, and took lodgings for myself in Lower Thames

Street. When the captain and I again met, I found present the young lady and another gentleman. I was most graciously received by all. The uncle of Catherine was likewise present, and, turning to his niece, said—

“So this is the messenger you contrived to engage, strictly as I watched you in this foolish affair. I see that a woman’s invention, like her love, has no bounds”—saying which, he good-humouredly patted the happy and blushing Catherine under the chin.

The captain retired with me to a separate room, where he told me that the whole had arisen out of the anger of his wife’s aunt, who had set her heart upon marrying her niece to a young clergyman of her neighbourhood, for whom she had not the smallest regard, and whose assiduities were hateful to her, as her heart was already engaged to Mr Stenton, a distant relation of her own; but, as his circumstances were not sufficiently prosperous to enable them to marry, she had concealed their love from all but Mrs H——.

“The death of her uncle, and my arrival in London, altered her views. She rebelled against her aunt’s authority, and refused to see the clergyman as a lover. This threw the old lady into a paroxysm of rage. Poor Catherine was locked up, and, all her repositories being searched, Mr Stenton’s letters were found. They were immediately sealed up, and a letter written to Mr Wilton, her brother, of the most alarming kind for the safety of his now wealthy niece, representing that she meant to throw herself and fortune away upon some peasant in the neighbourhood. He had posted, on receipt of the packet, to his sister, when his fears were further excited by the old lady’s conjectures. Catherine was unconscious of what had passed, until she was summoned to the presence of her uncle, whom she had seldom before seen. He is a good-hearted, but a positive, irascible man. No explanation was asked. When all ap-

peared so plain against the trembling girl, she was, by her uncle and aunt, hurried into a post-chaise, and was on her way to Mr Wilton's. She had contrived to write to me during the short time she was allowed to prepare for the journey, but had no opportunity until, struck by your manners, she resolved to shorten her confinement by trusting you, as her uncle's anger was so great that he had scarce spoken to her since they entered the chaise, but to threaten and abuse her. When I arrived, an explanation and reconciliation had taken place, and the marriage will follow in a few weeks. It only remains for you to consider in what manner we can serve you."

I returned him my thanks for their kind intentions; and said the young lady's purse, which I would not affront them by offering to return, was much more than sufficient reward for all I had done; and, begging I might not detain him longer from his friends, I bade him adieu, promising to call in a day or two.

CHARLES LAWSON.

“TAK a faither’s advice, Betty, my woman,” said Andrew Weir to his only daughter—“tak a faither’s advice, and avoid gaun blindfolded to your ruin. Ye are sune aneugh to marry these seven years yet. Marry! preserve us! for I dinna ken what the generation is turning to, but I’ll declare bits o’ lasses now-a-days haena the dolls weel oot o’ their arms, till they tak a guidman by the hand. But aboon everything earthly, I wad impress it upon ye, bairn, that ye canna be owre carefu o’ your company; mind that a character is a’ a woman has to carry her through the world, and ye should guard it like the apple o’ your e’e; and remember, that folk are aye judged o’ frae the company they keep. Now, how often maun I warn ye no to be seen wi’ Charles Lawson? He’s a clever lad, nae doubt—naebody denies that; but, oh, Betty, Betty, woman! wad ye only reflect that a’ gifts are no graces; and I am far mistaen if he hasna a serpent’s heart as weel as his tongue. He has naething o’ the fear o’ God before his een—ye canna deny that. In ae word, he is a wild, thoughtless ne’er-do-weel; and I charge ye—I command ye—Betty, that ye ne’er speak to him again in your born days; or, if ye do, ye surely will hae but little satisfaction to break your faither’s heart, and bring him to the grave wi’ sorrow and wi’ shame—for that, Betty, that wad be the end o’t.”

Elizabeth heard him, and bent her head upon her bosom to conceal her confusion. The parental homily was too late—she was already the wife of Charles Lawson.

nary that we go back, and inform the reader, in a few words, that Andrew Weir was a respectable farmer on the north side of the Tweed, and withal a decent and devout Presbyterian, and an elder in the kirk. Charles Lawson's parents were originally from Northumberland. They had known better days, and, at the period we have alluded to, were struggling with a hard farm in the neighbourhood of Andrew Weir's. Charles was not exactly what his father-in-law had described him; and, were we to express his portrait in a line, we should say, he had blue eyes and a broad brow, a goodly form and open heart. The ringlets which parted on Elizabeth's forehead were like the raven's wing, and loveliness, if not beauty, nestled around the dimples on her cheeks. Their affection for each other began in childhood, and grew with their years, till it became strong as their existence.

A few weeks after Andrew Weir had delivered the advice we have quoted to his daughter, Charles Lawson bade farewell to his parents, his wife, and his country, and proceeded to India, where a relative of his mother's had amassed a fortune, and who, while he refused to assist them in their distress, had promised to make provision for their son. As we are not writing a novel in three volumes, we shall not describe the scene of their parting, and tell with what agony, with what tears, and with what bitter words, Charles tore himself from his father, his mother, and his yet unacknowledged wife. The imagination of the reader may supply the blank. Hope urged him to go—necessity compelled him.

After his departure, Elizabeth drooped like an early lily beneath the influence of a returning frost. There were whisperings among the matrons and maidens of the neighbouring village. They who had formerly courted her society began to shun it; and even the rude clown, who lately stood abashed in her presence, approached her with

indecent familiarity. The fatal whisper first reached Andrew's ear at a meeting of the kirk-session, of which he was a member. He returned home troubled in spirit, a miserable and a humbled man, for his daughter had been his pride. Poor Elizabeth confessed that she was married, and attempted to prove what she affirmed. But this afforded no palliation of her offence in the eyes of her rigid and offended father.

"Oh, what hae I been born to suffer?" cried he, stamping his feet upon the ground. "O, you Witch o' Endor!—you Jezebel!—you disgrace o' kith and kin! Could naething—naething serve ye but breaking your puir auld faither's heart? Get out o' my sight!—get out o' my sight!"

He remained silent for a few moments—the parent arose in his heart—tears gathered in his eyes.

"But ye are still my bairn," he continued. "Oh, Betty, Betty, woman! what hae ye brocht us to?"

Again he was silent, and again proceeded—

"But I forgie ye, Betty! Yes, if naebodysel will, your faither will forgie ye for your mother's sake, for ye are a' that I hae left o' her. But we canna haud up our heads again in this pairt o' the country—that's impossible. I've lang thocht o' gaun to America; and now I'm driven till't."

He parted with his farm, and in the ensuing spring proceeded with his daughter to Canada. We shall not enter upon his fortunes in the New World—he was still broken in spirit; and, after twelve years' residence, he was neither richer nor happier than when he left Scotland. Elizabeth was now a mother, and the smiles of her young son seemed to shorten the years of her exile; yet, ever as she returned his smile, the thought of the husband of her youth flashed back on her remembrance, and anguish and misery shot through her bosom as the eagle darteth on its prey. Her heart was

not broken ; but it fell like a proud citadel, burying the determined garrison.

Charles Lawson had not been in India many months, when a party of native troops attacking the property of his relative, Charles, who had fallen wounded amongst them, was carried by them in their retreat into the interior of the country, where, for several years, he was cut off from all intercourse or communication with his countrymen. On obtaining his liberty, he found that his kinsman had been for some time dead, and had left him his heir. His wife—his parents—doubt—anxiety—impatient affection—trembling hope—all hastened his return. At length the white cliffs of Albion appeared before him, like a fair cloud spread on the unruffled bosom of the ocean; and in a few days more the green hills of his childhood met his anxious eye.

It was the grey hour of a summer night as he again approached the roof that sheltered his childhood. His horse as if conscious of supporting an almost unconscious rider, stopped involuntarily at the threshold. He trembled upon the saddle as a leaf that rustles in the wind. He raised his hand to knock at the door, but again withdrew it. The inmates of the house, aroused by the sound of a horse stopping at the door, came out to inquire the cause. Charles gazed upon them for a moment—it was a look of agony and disappointment—his heart gave one convulsive throb, and the icy sweat burst from his temples.

“Does not—does not Mr Lawson live here?” he inquired, almost gasping for words to convey the question.

“Mr Lawson! Na, na, sir,” replied the senior of the group, “it’s lang since he gaed awa. Ye ken he gaed a’ wrang, puir man, and he’s no lived here since the hard winter, for they didna come upon this parish.”

“Did not come upon this parish!” exclaimed Charles; “heaven and earth! what do you mean?”

"Mean! what wad I mean," answered the other, "but just that they were removed to their ain parish! Is there ony disgrace in that?"

"Oh, my father!—my poor mother!" cried Charles, wildly.

"Mercy, sir!" rejoined the astonished farmer, "are ye Maister Charles? Bairns! haste ye, tak the horse to the stable. Losh, Charles, man, and how hae ye been? But ye dinna ken me, man; I'm your auld schulefellow, Bob Graham, and this is my wife, Mysie Allan—ye mind o' Mysie! Haste ye, Mysie lass, kill twa ducks, and the bairns and me will hool the peas. Really, Charles, man, I'm sae glad to see ye!"

During this harangue, Charles, led by his warmhearted friend, had entered the dwelling of his nativity; where Mr Graham again continued—

"Ye aiblins dinna ken that auld Andrew Weir was sae sair in the dorts when ye gaed awa, that he set aff wi' Betty for America. But I hear they are comin hame again this back end. The bairn will be a stout callant noo, and faith ye maun marry Betty, for she was a mensefu lass."

Charles could only reply by exclaiming—

"America!—my wife!—my child!"

Having ascertained where he would find his parents, early on the following morning he departed, and about five in the afternoon approached the village where he had been told they resided. When near the little burying-ground, he stopped to look upon the most melancholy funeral procession he had ever witnessed. The humble coffin was scarce coloured, and they who bore it seemed tired of their burden. Three or four aged and poor-looking people walked behind it. Scarce was it lowered into the grave, ere all departed save one, meanly clothed in widow's weeds, and bent rather with the load of grief than of years. She alone lingered, weeping over the hastily-covered grave.

"She seems poor," said Charles, "and if I cannot comfort her, I may at least relieve her necessities;" and, fastening his horse to the gate, he entered the churchyard.

She held an old handkerchief before her face, only removing it at intervals to steal a hurried glance at the new-made grave.

"Good woman," said Charles, as he approached her, "your sorrows demand my sympathy -- could I assist you?"

"No! no!" replied the poor widow, without raising her face; "but I thank you for your kindness. Can the grave give up its dead?"

"But why should you remain here?" said he, with emotion; "tell me, could not I assist you?" And he placed a piece of money in her hand.

"No! no!" cried the widow, bitterly, and raising her head; "oh, that Mary Lawson should have lived to be offered charity on her husband's grave!"

"My mother! Gracious heaven, my mother!" exclaimed Charles, casting his arms around her neck.

Shall we describe the scene that followed? We will not—we cannot. He had seen his father laid in the dust, he had met his mother on his father's grave —— But we will not go on.

It was some weeks after this that he proceeded with his widowed mother to his native village, to wait the return of Elizabeth. Nor had he to wait; for, on the day previous to his return, Elizabeth, her son, and her father, had arrived. Charles and his parent had reached Mr Graham's—the honest farmer rushed to the door, and, hurrying both towards the house, exclaimed—

"Now, see if you can find onybody that ye ken here!"

His Elizabeth—his wife—his son—were there to meet him; the next moment she was upon his bosom, and her child clinging by her side, and gazing on his face. He

alternately held both to his heart—the mother and her son. Andrew Weir took his hand—his mother wept with joy, and blessed her children. Bob Graham and his Mysie were as happy as their guests. Charles Lawson bought the farm which Andrew Weir had formerly tenanted; and, our informant adds, they live on it still.

BON GAULTIER'S TALES.

MRS HUMPHREY GREENWOOD'S TEA-PARTY.

MRS HUMPHREY GREENWOOD was a stirring, lively, good-natured sort of person; had touched the meridian of her years; was mistress of a comfortable income; and possessed, withal, the privileged vivacity of a widow. Nobody gave nicer tea-parties than she; nobody managed to keep such a number of eligible bachelors on her visiting-list, and possessing, as she did, the nicest discrimination in drafting these in among the young ladies under her patronage, what wonder if no inconsiderable proportion of the matrimonial arrangements of her friends deduced their origin from these dangerously-seductive sofas in her snug little drawing-room?

It was in that snug little drawing-room that Mr Simon Silky first saw the future Mrs Simon; it was on one of those dangerously-seductive sofas that he found courage to put that question which procured him a better half, and a comfortable settlement for life for Miss Jemima Linton.

Miss Jemima Linton was still in that fluctuating period between girl and woman hood, at which young ladies giggle a great deal, and seem to be always in a flutter, when Mr Simon Silky first met her. She was fair in complexion with light hair and blue eyes; her face, in short, had a the delicacy of a wax doll, and nearly as much expression. She could say "yes, sir!" and "no, sir!" at the proper intervals in the course of a *tête-à-tête* conversation, and, when warmed a little into familiarity and ease, could even be conversant with reference to the weather, witho

changing colour above twice in the course of it. In a word, she was one of those excessively bashful and retiring young ladies, who always look as if they thought a man was going to make violent love to them, and who, if your conversation happen to diverge from the beaten track of the smallest of small talk, take fright, and are off as fast as possible to whisper to some of their companions, "La! what a strange man that is!"

This was the very kind of person for Mr Simon Silky, who was a bit of a sentimentalist in his way. When he met Miss Jemima Linton, the fair ideal on whom his fancy had often dwelt seemed to be realised. He came, he saw, and was conquered.

On entering Mrs Greenwood's drawing-room, one evening that he had been invited there to meet "a few friends in an easy way," having arrived rather late, he found the party already assembled. The fire blazed cheerfully out upon a bevy of tittering misses, who were seated on either side of it, whispering to each other in a timid and confidential tone, with here and there a young man amongst them making convulsive efforts to render himself amusing, while two or three putty-faced juniors, with very white shirt-collars, and very brightly-polished pumps—who had been called in to stop gaps in quadrilles, and render themselves otherwise useful—sat in the background, for the most part two on a chair, and speculating how many of the cakes that glistened on the table they might appropriate to themselves with any degree of decency. Mrs Humphrey Greenwood, the presiding divinity of this motley gathering, vulgarly yclept a "cookie-shine," was planted behind a brightly-burnished brass urn of liberal dimension, that hissed loudly on the table.

"Mr Simon," she exclaimed, advancing from her post of honour—"Mr Simon Silky, I'm so glad to see you; I really thought you had been going to desert us."

Our hero blustered out some inarticulate apology, to which his hostess of course paid no attention, but hurried on into the work of introduction.

"Mr Silky, Miss Silliman, Miss Gingerly, Miss Barbara Silliman, Miss Eggemon, Miss Jemima Linton; I think you know all the rest. Mr Scratcherd, you know Mr Silky." Mr Scratcherd grinned an assent. "Mr Silky, Mr Slap'emup. You'll find a seat for yourself somewhere. Try if some of the ladies will have pity, and take you in among them."

All this time, Mr Silky was engaged in distributing a comprehensive bow to everybody about him—an ordeal which, in any circumstances, to a nervous man like him, was no joke. But his agitation had the finishing touch given it by Mrs Greenwood's facetious observation as to the ladies *taking him in among them*. The blood rushed to his temples, and he subsided into a vacant chair, with a remark, directed to nobody in particular, as to how very warm the room was. Attention having been once drawn to this interesting fact, it became the topic of conversation for some five minutes, which gave Mr Simon Silky time to cool down, and to look about him a little. In the course of his survey, his eyes alighted on Miss Jemima Linton, who just at that moment happened to be scrutinising his outward man. Their eyes met; a glance of quick intelligence passed between them. The lady lowered hers, blushing up to them as she did so; and the enraptured Simon muttered to himself, "What charming confusion!" He felt a novel sensation gathering about his heart. Could it be love? At first sight, too. Many deny it, but we say that all genuine love is at first sight.

"He never loved, who loved not at first sight."

Mr Simon Silky was a reader of the Beauties of Shakspeare. This line took possession of his head, and he mused and looked, looked and mused, till he was roused from his reverie by Mrs Greenwood calling upon him to assist in

handing round the "cups which cheer but not inebriate." He started up, with a very vague notion of what he was to be about, and grasping a tea-cup, which his hostess informed him was Miss Jemima Linton's, in one hand, and a plate of cheesecakes in the other, he stumbled up to the lady, and consigning the cakes to her outstretched hand, held out the tea-cup to Miss Eggemon, who sat next, inquiring if she would please to be helped to a little cake. Miss Eggemon tittered, and exclaimed,

"Well, I never!"

"Gracious! the like of that, you know!" simpered Miss Silliman, burying her face in Miss Eggemon's neck.

"How very absurd!" sneered Miss Gingerly, who was verging to old-maidishness, and had a temper in which vinegar was the principal ingredient.

"Bless me, Mr Silky! what *are* you about?" cried Mrs Greenwood.

"Oh—why—yes—no—I see—beg pardon—dear me!" stammered poor Silky, reddening like an enraged turkey-cock, as he handed Miss Linton the cup, out of which the greater part of its contents had by this time been shaken, and seizing the dish of cakes with a sudden jerk, deposited one-half of them in the lady's lap, and the other half on the carpet.

"Tell me, where is fancy bread?" said Mr Horatio Slap'emup, who was a wit in his own small way, pointing to the cakes, which our hero was endeavouring to bring together again from the different corners into which they had wandered. A general laugh greeted him on every side as he rose from his knees covered with confusion. He looked at the fair Jemima as he did so. There was not the vestige of a smile on her face. "Good kind soul! *she* does not join in the vulgar mirth of these unfeeling creatures!" thought the unhappy Silky. "She pities me, and pity is akin to love." It did not strike him that there might be

another reason for her gravity. The spilled tea and greasy cheesecake had spoiled her white muslin dress irremediably, for that night at least—a circumstance calculated certainly to make any young lady melancholy enough; but this never entered the brain of Mr Simon Silky. Happy man!

“Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.”

With some difficulty he regained his chair, after stumbling over a footstool, and crushing the tail of a King Charles cocker, that was snorting on the hearthrug in all the offensiveness of canine obesity. His distress was at its climax.

“When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions,” thought he, recurring once more to the Beauties of Shakspeare. His ears felt as if they had been newly scalded, and objects floated in hazy confusion before his eyes. He commenced sipping his tea with desperate energy, wishing for a moment that it had been so much prussic acid. The patter of many voices sounded in his ears. They must be talking of him, “for they laughed consumedly;” and that confounded Slap'emup was obviously getting up a reputation for wit by cutting minute jokes at his expense.

“You've been at the Exhibition, Mr Silky,” said Mrs Greenwood, recalling him from the state of mental imbecility into which he was fast sinking.

“The Exhibition, you said, ma'am! Yes, yes, certainly, the Exhibition. Oh yes!” rejoined Mr Silky, struggling to concentrate his scattered faculties.

“Well, what is your opinion about the portrait?” continued his hostess.

“Portrait, really—which of them—there's so many?”

“Why, Mr Silky, what *has* come over you to-night? The ladies have been like to pull each other to pieces, for the last five minutes, about the portrait of an officer a little to the left of the door of the first room; and, I declare, you have not heard a word that has been going. Pretty doings,

Mr Simon; and who, may I ask, is the happy lady that so engrosses your thoughts?"

"Oh, Mrs Greenwood!"

"Well, well, then, if it's a secret, I won't press it! But what is your opinion of the portrait? Miss Barbara Silliman here maintains it is beauty in the abstract."

"Oh he's quite a love of a man!" broke in Miss Barbara, in a rapture of affectation; whereat Miss Gingerly appeared mightily shocked, and pursed up her mouth till it looked like a parched apple.

"But Miss Linton, on the contrary, says she thinks it rather plain for a military man. Now, we want your decision on this knotty point."

"Oh, why, really—a portrait of an officer, I think you said. Fair complexion, flaxen ringlets, and light blue eyes—beautiful, indeed! That is to say—I don't know; but"—and here poor Silky looked hopelessly about for an idea—"upon the whole, I think I declare for Miss Linton."

"Well, really, Mr Simon, that is coming to the point. Jemima, my dear, do you hear what Mr Silky says? Declares for you already! Upon my word, a fair proposal!" said Mrs Greenwood, catching up the allusion, and looking excessively matronly and significant.

"Fair complexion, flaxen ringlets, light blue eyes!" broke in Miss Barbara Silliman, with that delicate spitefulness to which young ladies are subject, when they suspect any of their rivals of having produced an impression on one of the male creatures. "A pretty officer, indeed! It's you, Miss Linton, that Mr Silky means. Quite a conquest, I declare." Having said this for the benefit of the company, she murmured to herself, "I wonder at the man's taste. A gawky minx!"

If Mr Silky felt uncomfortable before, he was now reduced to the lowest pitch of personal misery. He tried to smile, as if he took the thing as a good joke; but the contortions

of his visage were galvanic. Everybody, he was sure, was looking at him, and he stammered out some inarticulate words, by way of extricating himself from his awkward position. What they were he knew not; but they only seemed to have made matters worse; for another titter ran round the circle, and showers of badinage assailed him on every side. Mr Simon Silky began to speculate whether sitting on the points of a score of red-hot toasting-forks could be worse than his present torment.

He was pursuing this agreeable train of reflection, when the removal of the table to a corner of the room, and a general commotion, occasioned by the pushing back of sofas, and the laying away of chairs, made him aware that dancing was about to commence. The men, as they always do on these occasions, clustered together near the door, pulling on gloves—such of them as had them—and talking very thick and fast about nothing at all.

“Miss Gingerly, may I ask you to give the young folks a set of quadrilles?” inquired Mrs Greenwood.

“Certainly—with a great deal of pleasure,” coldly responded Miss Gingerly, blowing her nose with the end of her pocket-handkerchief, which she extracted partially from her black satin bag for the purpose, and feeling particularly venomous at being cut out of the dance, and her very, very faint chance of captivating a partner therein.

“Oh, thank you,” said Miss Eggemon, laying her hands affectionately on Miss Gingerly’s wrists. “You play quadrilles so nicely.” And then turning to Miss Jemima Linton, Miss Eggemon whispered, confidentially, “Such a player you never heard. Not three bars in time. How provoking Mrs Greenwood should ask her to play. Just listen; did you ever hear the like of that?”

Miss Gingerly had laid her black satin bag on the piano, drawn herself up with all the frosty-faced dignity of waning maidenhood, and was performing a prelude before commenc-

ing operations, which was chiefly remarkable for its ingenious flights from key to key, and bewildering accumulation of false concords.

"Gentlemen, find partners for yourselves," said the lively Mrs Greenwood; and the gentlemen, after looking at one another, disentangled themselves from the knot into which they were gathered, and, shuffling up each to the lady that pleased his fancy, solicited the honour of her hand. The couples had taken their places, and Miss Gingerly was dashing away into the heart of the "Highland Laddie," when it was discovered that there was still a couple awanting.

"Mr Silky, you dance?" said all the men at once to that gentleman, who was sitting pensively in a corner.

"Oh, really!" replied Silky, smiling a sickly smile, and making vague protestations of inability.

"Not dance!" said the vivacious Mr Slap'emup. "Fie on you!—oh, fie! And Miss Linton looking at you there, like Eve on the eve of Paradise, as if

‘She would be woo’d, and not unsought be won.’"

There was nothing for it but that Silky should make up to Miss Jemima, and lead her out to dance. This he did among the nods, and winks, and whispers of all present; and by the time he got into his place in the quadrille, he did not very well know which end of him was uppermost. Away rattled Miss Gingerly at the "Highland Laddie," and away bounced the dancers through the mazes of the figure. Dancing a quadrille is with some people no trifling matter, and Mr Simon Silky was one of these. He bent to it all the energies of his not over-powerful mind; and, while it lasted, beyond a passing word or two, he had no conversation to bestow upon his partner. It was amusing to see with what earnestness he watched the movements of those who preceded him, and, when his own turn came, the exhibition he made would have made a Timor grin. First,

he threw out his arms to steady himself, and then jerking forward his right foot, brought himself suddenly into the centre of the floor, where he began throwing his legs confusedly about, till they seemed to be involved in hopeless entanglement. All the time he kept his eyes fixed anxiously upon his shoe-ties. It was obviously a critical affair with him to preserve his equipoise, and each time that he got back safely to his place, a sigh broke from him, as if a great burden had been taken off his mind, and he wiped the sweat away that glistened in heavy beads upon his brow. At length the quadrille ended. Mr Silky thanked heaven; and, leading the fair Jemima to a seat, planted himself at her side, and manfully endeavoured to open up a conversation with her.

Dance succeeded dance, and by degrees the elements of the party got tolerably well interfused. Poor Miss Gingerly wrought away at her everlasting set of Scotch quadrilles, and nobody ever volunteered to relieve her of her task, "she played so well." At intervals some of the young ladies quivered through a fashionable ballad, and occasionally an attempt was made to get up one of those melancholy chants, which, by some strange misnomer, pass current in society for glees. In these, Mr Scratcherd, who sang bass, distinguished himself so signally, that loud calls were made upon him for a song, and Mr Scratcherd, after a little preliminary modesty, yielded to the call. He then began raving about an "Old Oak Tree," and groaned up and down the scale, till his voice became lost in the bottom of his neckcloth. Serious fears were entertained whether he would be able to get it up again, but these happily turned out to be unfounded. Again his voice mounted to its natural level, and after rolling about for some time, "grating harsh discord," wore itself out in a cadence of confused gutturals. "Bravo, bravo," cried the men. "A very fine quality of bass," exclaimed his friend, Slap'emup,

who affected to be a judge; and Mr Scratcherd blew his nose, and fell back in his chair in a state of great personal satisfaction.

With a thoughtful regard for the comforts of her guests, Mrs Greenwood had, early in the evening, thrown open her little back drawing-room, in which were placed abundance of refreshments, to sustain them through the fatigues of dancing and conversation. By a succession of visits to this room, Mr Simon Silky had succeeded in giving firmness to his nerves. He was gradually becoming less and less bashful. There must have been something bracing about the atmosphere of the apartments, for to this, and not to the bottle of port, to which he was observed to have frequent recourse, must be attributed that jauntiness of step and slipshod volubility of tongue which he now displayed. He danced every dance, and for the most part with Miss Jemima for his partner. What though his uncouth gestures provoked a smile, and his assiduities to the young lady were commented on at every hand. He cared not. His spirit was in the third heaven of exaltation, and the whole world might go hang for him.

"Miss Linton," he exclaimed, seizing her hand fervently—they were seated on a sofa in the back drawing-room, while the others were labouring through a country-dance in the front—"Miss Linton, hear me for a moment. Let me use this opportunity of stating what I have long felt—what I now feel—what I shall always feel." And again Mr Silky pressed her hand tenderly in both of his.

"Oh, sir!" timidly responded the lady.

"Yes, adorable Jemima! I can no longer repress my emotion. You see before you a victim to your charms. The moment I beheld you, I don't know how it was, but my heart thrilled with a transport delightful as it was new. I felt—I felt—in short, I felt as I never felt before. My senses forsook me, and I said and did I know not what. These

soulless creatures treated my confusion with ridicule; but, in your eyes, methought I could read pity, compassion, commiseration, sympathy. Say, was I right, or was I misled by the fond delusions of my own passion?"

"Oh, sir!" again exclaimed the bewildered Jemima.

"That look! I was not then deceived. Oh extend that pity into love! I lay myself and my fortune at your feet." And here Mr Simon Silky slipped off the sofa and down upon his knees, overcome partly with love and partly with intoxication. "Dearest Jemima! say only that you will be mine?"

"Oh, sir!" once more sighed the blushing maiden, dropping her head upon the shoulder of her suitor, who acknowledged the movement by snatching a kiss from her pouting lips.

"Ods! that came twangingly off. I'm afraid we're like to spoil sport here," exclaimed Mr Slap'emup, who at this moment entered the room, with Miss Gingerly on his arm.

"Gracious! how very improper!" cried Miss Gingerly, wishing from the depth of her soul that it had only been her own case.

"What's improper, ma'am?" retorted Silky, turning to her a look of drunken gravity, and endeavouring, with no little difficulty, to get on his legs again. "If I choose to kiss this young lady, or this young lady chooses to kiss me, that's no business of yours, I suppose? 'Have not saints lips, and holy palmers, too?' as the divine Shakspeare says; and what are lips for, I should like to know, if not to kiss? Don't frown at me, Miss Graveairs. I'm a man—a man, ma'am, and I shall do just as I please. Shan't I, Jemima, dear?"

He turned for an answer to his appeal; but the young lady had left the room.

"Jemima, I say," continued Silky, getting more and more overcome. He looked around the room; and, finding no

trace of the lady, began chanting in a lackadaisical tone—

‘ And has she then fail’d in her truth,
The beautiful maid I adore?’

But I don’t care that for her!” And he tried to snap his fingers; but failed in the attempt. “It’s an ungrateful world—a vile world.”

“Oh, gracious me! let me away,” exclaimed Miss Gingerly, in alarm. “He’s certainly tipsy.”

“Tipsy—tipsy! Who’s tipsy? Let me see her. Woman, woman, to get yourself into such a state! I’m ashamed of you; I am indeed. But it’s the weakness of the sex.

‘Frailty, thy name is woman!’”

This apostrophe was addressed to some visionary female that flitted before Mr Silky’s mental optics, and whom he followed, with his hands groping before him, with the voice and gesture of Mr Charles Kean pursuing the airdrawn dagger in the character of Macbeth. “Laugh away; it’s very amusing, isn’t it? Nero fiddled while Rome was burning; but I know better.”

“Mr Silky, you’ll better go home,” said Mrs Greenwood, who, with the remainder of the party, had by this time entered the room.

“Home! exactly so. I *am* at home, my charmer—perfectly at home; and you’re at home; we’re all at home. But no more wine, Mrs Greenwood; temperance and teetotalism for ever. We are beset with temptations in this wicked world—temptations, I say—Jemima, you’re an angel! It is as much as a man can do to preserve his uprightness.” And, in proof that it was more than he could, down rolled our hero on the floor, in a profound stupor.

“Carry Master Silence to bed,” remarked the ingenious Slap’emup, highly tickled with the catastrophe that had befallen the too—too bashful Silky.

A coach was procured, and he was conveyed to his lodg-

ings, where the sun found him in bed at noon next day. His dreams had been of the most ghastly kind. He had fancied himself compelled, by a fiend, to swallow huge goblets of port wine, strongly adulterated with brimstone, and dragged about by a fury, who held his neck within a halter. The fiend was Slap'emup—the fury, Miss Jemima Linton. He started from his dream, and with his hand pressed against his aching head, fell to adjusting the confused reminiscences of the previous evening's proceedings. He remembered nothing but that he had proposed for the hand of some young lady or other, and had been accepted. Well for him it was that memory went no farther, or he would never have found courage to visit Mrs Greenwood again. That he did visit her again, however, may be inferred from an announcement which the newspapers, not many weeks after, gave to the public:—

“Married at Edinburgh, on the 6th instant, Mr. Simon Silky to Miss Jemima Linton.”

THE RECLUSE OF THE HEBRIDES.

“Still caring, despairing,
Must be my bitter doom;
My woes here shall close ne’er
But with the closing tomb.”—BURNS.

I RESIDED some years ago in the Island of Tyree, which is one of the most western of the Hebrides; and, in the course of my business, had often occasion to cross by the base of Ben Chinevarah, whose rugged and sterile appearance impresses the mind with a sickening sadness. The narrow footpath sometimes dives into the deep and sullen gloom of the mountain glen, whose silence is unbroken, save by the torrent’s red rush, and again winds along the edge of the steep precipice, among the loose rocks that have been hurled from their beds aloft by the giant efforts of time, where the least false step would precipitate the unwary traveller into the abyss below. There no cheering sound of mirth was ever heard, the blithe whistle of the ploughman never swelled upon its echoes, nor often did the reaper’s song disturb its gloomy silence. The ear is assailed, on the one hand, by the discordant and dismal notes of the screech-owl; and, on the other, by the angry roar of the waves that beat, with ceaseless lash, the broken shore. A small hut now and then bursts upon the view, raising its lowly roof beneath the shelter of the mountain rock, and adds to the cheerlessness of the scene. One of those small cottages often attracted my notice, by its external neatness, and the laborious industry by which a small garden had been formed around the dwelling: and by degrees I ingratiated myself

into the good graces of its owner, who, I found, by his knowledge and conversation, was of a different cast from the dwellers around him. I knew by his accent that he was a foreigner; and, feeling an interest in him, I often endeavoured to gain some account from him of the early part of his life; but when the subject was hinted at, he at once changed the conversation.

Having occasion last summer to spend some days at the house of a friend in Argyleshire, I availed myself of this opportunity to visit my old acquaintance at Tyree. I found him stretched on the bed of sickness, and fast verging towards his end. When last I had seen him, his appearance, though infirm, evinced but few signs of physical decay; and, though the storms of scores of winters had blown over him, still his eye sparkled with animation, and his raven locks retained the fresh and jetty colour of the native of "Italia's sunny clime." But now, how changed the appearance! His eyeballs were dim, deep sunken in their sockets; a few scattered grey hairs waved carelessly over his finely-arched eyebrows; and his forehead and cheeks were deeply furrowed with the traces of sickness and secret wo. When I entered the lowly dwelling, he raised his lacklustre eyes, and stretched forth his hand to meet my grasp.

"And is Heaven yet so kind," said he, raising his wasted hand in thanks to the Disposer of all good, "as to send one pitying friend to soothe my dreary and departing moments? Ah, sir, the hand of the grim tyrant is laid heavily upon me, and I must soon appear in the presence of an offended Deity. If you knew how awful are the feelings of a mind loaded with iniquity, of a soul immersed in guilt, when the last moment is approaching that separates us from mortality, and the misdeeds of a wicked life stand in ghastly array, adding stings to an already scared conscience, you would shrink at what you now deem the gay dreams of

youthful frailty, and shun the delusive and seducing snares of a wretched world."

Pointing to a block of wood alongside his pallet bed, he desired me to be seated, and, after drying the tear of sorrow from his swollen eye, he thus proceeded:—

"Often, in those moments when the sweet beams of health were mine, have you desired a recital of the events of my past life; but a feeling of shame withheld me from the task. Now, when I have nothing to fear but death and the dread hereafter, if you will have the patience to hear me, I will briefly unfold to you the causes which reduced me from a state of affluence, to become a fugitive amid the rugged rocks and the inclement skies of a foreign land."

I assented, and he went on with his story.

"My name," said he, "in the more fortunate years of my life, was Alphonso; and the city of Venice gave me birth. I was the only child of an opulent citizen, and need scarcely inform you that no restraint was laid upon my inclinations when a child; and the dawn of manhood beheld me plunged amid every intemperance which that luxurious city then afforded. Money was plentifully supplied me by my parents to support my extravagances; and I sought after happiness among the rounds of pleasure and the gay circles of society; but I only met with desires ungratified, hopes often frustrated, and wishes never satisfied. I had a friend. He was called Theodore. I loved him as dearly as a selfish being like myself *could* love any one. He shared in all my pleasures.

"An amorous, jealous, and revengeful disposition is commonly laid to the share of the Italians; and, with sorrow I confess, that formed the principal ingredient of my character. I had reached my twentieth year of thoughtlessness and folly, when, one night at the opera, a young lady in an opposite box attracted my attention; and my eyes were insensibly riveted upon the beauteous figure. I need not tell

you that she was beautiful—she was loveliness itself. I will not trespass on your time in describing the new and pleasing sensations that arose in my bosom; you have trod the magic paths of pleasure, and bowed to the charms of beauty: they are not unknown to you.

“I felt that all my libertine pursuits had only been the shadows of pleasure; and from that moment I determined to abandon them, and fix my love on her alone. We became acquainted, and I found that she was as worthy of the purest love as my fond wishes desired. She was the only child of Count Rudolpho; and, for the space of three months, I was a constant visiter at her father’s palazzo. In due time I pleaded the force of my love. But what were the sensations of my soul, when the tear started from her eye of beauty, and the dreadful sentence burst upon my ear—‘I am the bride of Theodore!’

“I burst from her presence with a palpitating heart, and returned homewards, agitated by the conflicting passions of despair and revenge. I drew my sword from its sheath, and promised the blood of Theodore, of the friend of my bosom, to its point. The steel trembled in my grasp as the vow fell from my lips, and my heart recoiled at the idea of shedding blood; but the still small voice was an unequal match with the baneful principles of a corrupted soul.”

The recluse stopped, and the loud sobs of sorrow and repentance alone burst upon the gloomy silence of the scene. The hectic flush of fever played and wantoned across his pallid features, as if it seemed to exult in the weakness of mortality, and delight in the loveliness of its own soul-loathed ravages. The tears dropped large and plentiful from his eyes, and his spirit seemed bended and broken with the racking remembrance. I bent over the wasted form of the wretched penitent, and while I poured the voice of comfort in his ear, and wiped the tears from his

eyes, his soul resumed its wonted firmness, and even a smile beamed upon his blanched lips, as he grasped my hand, and pressed it to his bosom in silence, and with thankfulness.

“Behold!” said he, drawing an old sword from beneath the side of his miserable straw pallet—“behold this steel, red-rusted with the blood of Theodore, from which the bitter tears of sixty long winters have been unable to efface the stain. Pardon the feelings of an infirm old man. My soul weeps blood at the remembrance.

“I pitched upon the bridal eve of Theodore for that of his death, and the seizure of his bride; and hired the leader of a band of ruffians to assist me in the scheme. The fatal night, so big with horror, at last arrived. The sun sank sullenly into the shades of the west, and his departing gleams glanced redly and angrily upon me. The raven wings of early night fell upon Venice; and I stepped into my gondola, with my hired followers. We set forward upon our errand. The palazzo of Count Albert was soon gained. Busy nature waxed calm and hushed; the artisan had retired to the sweets of his lowly but happy cottage; the convent-bell had tolled, solemn and slow, the vesper knell; and then

‘Uprose the yellow moon,’

silvering the rippling waters of the canals, and glancing its beams upon the glittering palaces of Venice. It was a lovely night; but my soul ill brooked the calm grandeur of the scene.

“By the treachery of a servant, my comrades were admitted into Count Rudolpho’s grounds, whilst I attended the nuptial rites with the well-dissembled face of friendship. Joy was dancing in every eye but mine. My hand trembled at times on the hilt of my poniard, and I awaited the favourable moment with a degree of impatience bordering on frenzy. Many a fair maid was there, tripping amid the

joyous throng, whose beauty might have warmed the frigid heart of an anchorite; but my eyes and mind were upon the dear, dear Violetta: she was lovelier than ever, but—she was the spouse of Theodore.

“The garden of the count was remarkably beautiful, and the trees in it had been grandly festooned with variegated lamps on the present occasion. The night was pleasant and calm, and the youthful couple retired from the crowded saloon to the garden for a few minutes, to enjoy the freshness of nature. I silently followed, unperceived, till they seated themselves in an arbour, whose beauty was unworthy of a villain’s tread. Then suddenly I presented myself at the entrance; and the unsuspecting Theodore rose to embrace me. How shall I give utterance to the rest? My friend rose to embrace me; and I drew my poniard, and was about to plunge it into his bosom, when Violetta, whose attention this action had not escaped, rushed between us, to stay my hand. Horror! her heart received the blow I had intended for her husband. She uttered a piercing cry, and fell, a bleeding corpse, at my feet.

“The sound attracted the attention of my ruffianly associates, who were ready at hand to carry off the bride, and they hurried to the spot. Theodore, at first surprised and terror-stricken, now roused himself to energy. With the fury of a maniac, he rushed upon me, and felled me senseless to the earth. How long I lay in this situation I know not; but when my senses returned, the palazzo was in flames, and the clashing of swords and the groans of the wounded sounded horribly in my ears. And this was my doing. I had been the means of introducing into Count Rudolpho’s grounds a band of desperadoes, to whom bloodshed was familiar; and I doubted not that they were at their work of blood and rapine. I repented of the deed, but it was too late.

“The murdered Violetta lay on the ground at a short

distance from me; the moonbeams played full upon her ghastly and distorted features; and her robes, her bridal robes, were deeply stained with blood. Her pulse had long since ceased to beat, and she felt cold to the touch. Resolved that no profane hand should consign to the earth her blessed remains, I threw the body across my shoulder, and fled with it from the garden. I felt not the weight of the burden, for excitement made me 'hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.' I soon reached the canal, leaped into my gondola with my precious burden, and, shortly afterwards, gained my father's palace. Ere the moon set, I had dug a deep grave in his garden, in which I buried her on whom I had doated, bedewing the earth with my tears as I proceeded in my work.

"It was at length completed; and, with the morning's dawn, I fled from Venice. Despair added wings to my flight, and the land of France received me in her fostering arms. I have, since that time, wandered in many a clime, to wear away my grief, but in vain. I have fought under the banner of your king; and, though my arm was never palsied in the day of battle, death has been denied me. I now lie here, aged and forlorn. The hand of death is heavy on me, and chilly tremors are creeping over my exhausted frame. The just decrees of God have denied me even a friend to close my weary eyes; and my dust must mingle with the dust of strangers, far, far from the sepulchre of my fathers, and the home of my childhood."

After a short pause, the Recluse continued—

"Here, sir," said he, "take this sword—it has been the constant companion of my travels—its blade is unsullied by ignoble blood; and when you look upon it, after the grave receives the wretched Alphonso, it may convey a lesson that volumes could not inculcate."

I received the sword from his hand, which was trembling and cold. He turned his face from me; and before I had

time to speak, a deep groan announced his departure to the mansions of another world. I called the inmates of the adjoining cottage, who took charge of the body ; and I left the spot with a feeling which words cannot express, but which will be understood by those who look with the eye of pity upon the errors of a fellow-mortal.

ELLEN ARUNDEL.

ELLEN ARUNDEL was the only daughter of an officer in the British service, who, with his sword for his patrimony, had entered early into the profession of arms as the means of maintenance; and he had, accordingly, pursued it with that enthusiastic spirit of honour which is dictated by the considerations of family pride, the hope of fame, the dread of disgrace, and the most ardent love of glory.

The utmost height, however, to which he had risen, when he committed the folly of matrimony, by uniting his destiny to that of the portionless daughter of a venerable, respectable, unbeneficed clergyman, was that of a lieutenant in a foot regiment. By dint of careful management on the part of his wife, they contrived to live happily together, nor did the increase of their family—for Ellen made her appearance within the first year after their marriage—add to their difficulties.

In the care and superintendence of their darling daughter, did their years roll on in humble content. If they heaved a sigh, it was for their Ellen's future welfare; if they breathed a wish, it was to see her placed in a situation which might guard her against the attacks of poverty, and the designs of iniquity. From the former, they were aware, beauty and accomplishments would prove no shield; and they trembled when they reflected that they might prove the most powerful incitement to the latter. The sweets of life are not to be enjoyed without its accompanying embitterments. The regiment in which Mr Arundel served received orders to embark for America, in transports already prepared for the reception of the British forces. On the

communication of this intelligence, so subversive of their little plans of economy and felicity, Mrs Arundel earnestly entreated that she and Ellen might be the companions of his voyage. For awhile Mr Arundel would not consent to this, from a fear of incurring expense which they were unable to support; but all the difficulties which the narrowness of their finances suggested were obviated by a thousand little arrangements, the ingenious devices of love; and the command of a company, which was conferred upon him before the embarkation, relieved them from their anxiety.

Few events happened, either during their voyage, or on their arrival at Boston, except that the assiduities of a young officer of another regiment, who accompanied them in the transport, seemed to have made some impression on the heart of Ellen Arundel. She listened to his tales of love, with the full sanction of her parents, and sighed out the confession that his passion was returned. Mr Meredith was formed on the model which Captain Arundel had, in idea, fixed on for the husband of his Ellen. To the qualifications of a soldier, he added those which most highly adorn private life; nor was his income limited, for he was the only son of a gentleman of fortune. But both Captain Arundel and Mr Meredith were too regardful of decency and propriety to hasten an event of so much importance, till the father of the young gentleman had been made acquainted with the attachment; and letters from Captain Arundel and the lover were, accordingly, prepared, for the purpose of being despatched to Europe by the first ship that should sail.

But alas! these precautions were soon rendered unnecessary, by events which dissolved the bonds of affection. On that day when the attack of Bunker's Hill occasioned a carnage which thinned the British ranks, Captain Arundel and Mr Meredith stood foremost in the bloody contest. Accident

had placed them in the same brigade: they fought and fell together. The body of the young officer was carried off by the Americans; and the mortally-wounded captain conveyed to the habitation of his wretched wife and daughter, where, shortly afterwards, he expired.

The keen and piercing anguish felt by Ellen and her mother, in consequence of this sorrowful event, had changed to silent and corroding melancholy, when they embarked for their native land, after having received every attention which the governor and garrison could offer as a tribute to the memory of the deceased. On their arrival in Britain, a pension was granted to Mrs Arundel, which, in the event of her death, was to be continued to her daughter; and with this they retired to a small village northward of the Scottish metropolis, where a maiden sister of Captain Arundel, who was remarkably fond of Ellen, resided.

But, as no retirement will conceal the charms of beauty, nor any circle, however confined, prevent the fame of accomplishments from spreading beyond its limit, Mr Newton, a widower of independent fortune, not much past the prime of life, having been told of Ellen, resolved to visit the Arundels. An opportunity soon presented itself. The house which the ladies inhabited was advertised for sale; and, under pretence of an intention to purchase, he wrote Mrs Arundel, desiring to know when it would be convenient for him to call; to which Mrs Arundel returned a polite answer, naming an early day.

Mr Newton went; and, after he had viewed the house and gardens with the air of an intending purchaser, Mrs Arundel, desirous of cultivating the acquaintance of so distinguished a neighbour, asked him to stay tea; which being unhesitatingly accepted, he was introduced to the fair, the amiable, the still mourning Ellen. Prepared by the universal voice to admire, love was the immediate consequence of a visit, which he requested leave to repeat, in

terms with which civility could not refuse to comply; and a few weeks confirmed Mr Newton the ardent and the professed lover of Ellen. But her heart was still engaged; nor could she abandon even a hopeless passion. The character, the fortune, the unobjectionable person of Mr Newton, were urged to her, by her only friends, with such energy, but mildness, of persuasion, that, enforced by the declarations of her admirer, she was prevailed upon to promise him her hand, though not her heart; and a day was named for the celebration of their nuptials.

The necessary preparations now engaged the attention of Mr Newton and the two matron ladies; whilst Ellen passively yielded to the assiduities of her friends, and suffered the adornments of her person, and the intended provisions of settlement to be adjusted, without once interfering.

A few mornings before the appointed day, as Ellen was seated at breakfast with her mother and aunt, a note was put into her hands. She saw at a glance that it was from Mr Newton; and she immediately handed it across the table to Mrs Arundel, who read:—

“MADAM,—That your heart is not at all interested in the intended event, you have, with candour, frequently acknowledged to me. You will not, therefore, even wish to receive an apology for my releasing you from an unsuitable engagement.

“My long-lost son—my son whom I had for years resigned to Heaven—is restored to me; and Providence, which has bestowed on me this consummate happiness, will not permit me to add to it a wish which concerns myself. He is young; he is amiable; and more worthy of your regard than I am. It is my sincere wish that he should become your husband. I shall, therefore, take an early opportunity of introducing him to you.

“My real name is *not* what you have hitherto considered it to be. I changed it when, on the supposed death of my

son, I retired from my usual place of residence to a distant part of the kingdom, to avoid the importunities of some worthless relations; but, until I have the honour of disclosing to you in person my real name, I beg to subscribe myself, Madam, yours very truly,

“J. B. NEWTON.

“*To Miss Ellen Arundel.*”

When this most extraordinary epistle was read, Ellen turned deadly pale, and would certainly have fallen to the ground, had not a young man entered through the window which opened out on the lawn, and caught her in his arms. He was followed by Mr Newton.

“Ellen,” exclaimed the latter, “behold my son!”

The sorrowing girl cast her eyes upon the form of him who held her.

“Meredith!” she cried, and threw herself, weeping, upon his shoulder. Her tears were tears of joy. Little more remains to tell. Ellen Arundel gave her hand to the son on the very day which had been appointed for her nuptials with the father.

CHATELARD.

SOME time after the unfortunate Queen Mary had established her court at Holyrood, on her return from France, to ascend the throne of her ancestors, a stranger arrived at a certain tavern or hostelry, kept by one Goodal, at the foot of the Canongate of Edinburgh. The former had last come from Leith, where he had been landed from a French vessel some two or three hours previously. He was a young man, probably about three or four and twenty, tall and handsome in person, of a singularly pleasing countenance, and of mild and exceedingly gentleman-like demeanour. His lofty forehead and expressive eye bespoke the presence of genius, or, at least, of an intellect of a very high order; while his general manners indicated a refined and cultivated mind. There was marked, however, on the brow of the interesting stranger very palpable traces of saddening thoughts—his whole countenance, indeed, exhibiting the characteristics of a deep and rooted melancholy; but it was of a gentle kind, and bore no likeness to the stern gloominess of disappointed ambition. His sadness was evidently a sadness of the heart—the result of some grievous pressure on its best and tenderest feelings and affections.

After having partaken of some refreshment, the stranger desired a small measure of wine to be brought him. This order was executed by mine host in person; and, indeed from what afterwards followed, it seemed to have been given with an express view to that result; for, on the landlord's placing the wine before his guest, the latter requested him, with great politeness of manner, to sit down and share

it with him; saying that he wanted a little information on two or three particular points. Mine host, seating himself as desired, expressed his readiness to afford him any information of which he himself was possessed. Having thanked the former for his civility, and pressed him, not in vain, to taste of his own wine, the stranger said—

“Is the queen, my friend, just now at Holyrood?”

He was answered in the affirmative. The querist paused, sighed, and next inquired if she walked much abroad—what were the hours she devoted to that recreation—whether she was accompanied by many attendants on these occasions—and whether her ordinary promenade was a place easy of access. Having been informed on all these points, he again relapsed into thought, and again sighed profoundly. After a short time, however, he once more recovered himself, and suddenly exclaimed, but more by way of soliloquy than inquiry—

“Is she not beautiful—transcendently beautiful?”

Mine host, who was not a little surprised by the abruptness of the question, and the enthusiasm of manner in which it was expressed, replied, that she surely was “Just as bonny a creature as he had ever clapt ee on—a plump, sonsy, nice-lookin lass.”

A slight expression of disgust, or rather of horror, at the homely terms employed by mine host in speaking of the beauty of the queen, passed over the countenance of his guest. It was, however, but momentary, and was not observed, or at any rate not understood, by him whose language had called it forth.

“Ay, beautiful is she,” went on the enthusiastic stranger, leaning back in his chair, and gazing on the roof, in a fit of ecstasy, and in seeming unconsciousness of the presence of a third party—“beautiful is she to look upon, as is the rising sun emerging from the purpled east; beautiful as his setting amidst the burnished clouds of the west; lovely as

the full moon hanging midway in her field of azure; grateful to the sight as the green fields of spring, or the flowers of the garden; and pleasant to the ear are the tones of her voice, as the song of the nightingale in the grove, or the sound of the distant waterfall."

Here the speaker paused in his rhapsody, continued silent for some moments, then suddenly returning, as it were, to a sense of the circumstances in which he was placed, he brought his hands over his forehead and eyes, as one recovering from an agony of painful and melancholy thoughts. Surprised by this extraordinary conduct of his guest, the landlord of the house began to conceive that he had got into the company of a madman; yet he marvelled much what description of madness it could be, since it was made evident only when the queen was spoken of—the stranger speaking on all other subjects rationally and composedly.

"She walks not much abroad, you say, my friend?" said the latter, resuming the conversation which he had broken off to give utterance to the rhapsody which has just been quoted.

"Very seldom, sir," replied mine host; "for ye see she doesna fin hersel quite at hame yet amang us; but she'll come to by and by, I've nae doot."

"And she is not easy of access, you say—no chance of one being able to throw himself in her way?"

"Unco little, I should think," replied mine host, "unless she could be fa'n in wi' gaun to the chapel to mass; for she still abides by thae abominations, for a' John Knox can say till her."

A flush of resentment and indignation crossed the pale countenance of the stranger at the last expressions of the innkeeper, and he threw a glance at him strongly expressive of these feelings, but suddenly checked himself, paused for a moment, and then resumed his queries in the calm and gentle tones which seemed natural to him—

"How likes she the country, know ye?"

"Indeed, I canna weel say," replied mine host; "but I rather doot, frae what I hear, she's no ategither reconciled till't yet. She thinks, I daursay, we're rather a roughspun set o' folk—a wee thing coorse i' the grain or sae."

"Ay, that ye are, that ye are," said the stranger, with more candour than courtesy, again throwing himself back in his chair, and again beginning to rhapsodise as before. "She is among ye—the beautiful, the gentle, the accomplished, the refined—as a fawn amongst a herd of bears. She is in your wild and savage land, like a lovely and tender flower growing in the cleft of a rock—a sweet and gentle thing, blooming alone in the midst of rudeness and barrenness. Oh, uncongenial soil! Oh, discordant association! Dearest, cruellest, loveliest of thy sex!"

If mine host was amazed at the first outpouring of his guest's excited mind, it will readily be believed that it was not lessened by this second ebullition of fervour and passion. He, in truth, now became convinced that he was distracted; and, under this impression, felt a strong desire to be quit of him as soon as possible. With this view, he took an early opportunity of stealing unobserved out of the apartment—a feat which he found no difficulty in performing, as his guest seemed ultimately so wholly wrapped up in his own thoughts, as to be quite unconscious of what was either said or done in his presence. Soon after mine host had retired, the stranger ordered paper, pen, and ink to be brought him. They were placed upon his table, he himself the while walking up and down the apartment with measured stride and downcast look, as if again lost in profound and perplexing thought; and at intervals the sound of his footsteps, thus traversing his chamber, was heard throughout the whole of the night. The stranger had slept none; he had not even retired to seek repose; but those periods during the night—and they were of considerable length—in

which all was silent in his apartment, were employed in writing; and when morning came, the result of his labours was exhibited in a letter, curiously, or rather fancifully, folded, tied with a green silk thread, and highly perfumed. This letter was addressed on the back, "To the Most Illustrious Princess, Mary, Queen of Scotland."

Having brought the proceedings of the stranger to this point, we will shift the scene to the sitting apartment of the queen in Holyrood. Here, surrounded with her maids, the young and lovely princess was, at the moment of which we speak, engaged in working embroidery, and laughing and chatting with her attendants, amongst whom were two or three young French ladies, who had accompanied her from France. The queen and her maids were thus employed, then, when the gentleman-usher, who stood at the door of the apartment, entered, and, with a low obeisance, presented a letter to the queen. It was the same as that addressed to her by the stranger, and above referred to. The queen took the letter, with a gracious smile, from the person presenting it, and, contemplating it for a moment, before she opened it, with a look of pleased surprise—

"This, sure," she said, "is from none of our Scottish subjects: the fold is French." And she sighed. "It has the cut and fashion of the *billet doux* of St Germain; and," she added, laughing, "the precise flavour, too, I declare. But I should know this handwriting," she went on; "I have seen it before. This, however, will solve the mystery." And she tore the letter open, and was instantly employed in reading it, blushing and smiling by turns, as she proceeded with the perusal. When she had done, "Maria," she said, raising her eyes from the paper, and addressing one of her French ladies, "who, think you, is this letter from?"

"I cannot guess, madam," replied the young lady appealed to.

"Do try," rejoined Mary.

"Nay, indeed, I cannot," said the former, now pausing in her work, and looking laughingly at her mistress. "Perhaps from the Count Desmartine, or from Dufour, or Dubois."

"No, no, no," replied the queen, laughing; "neither of these, Maria; but I will have compassion on your curiosity, and tell you. Would you believe it?—it is from Chatelard, the poet."

"Chatelard!" repeated the maiden, in amazement. "What in all the earth can have brought him here?"

"Nay, I know not," said the queen, blushing, for she guessed, or rather feared, the cause. "But read, and judge for yourself," she added, handing her attendant the letter, which contained a very beautiful laudatory poem, full of passion and feeling, addressed to herself, and which the writer concluded by requesting that he might be permitted to form part of her court; declaring that it would be joy inexpressible to him to be near her person—he cared not in how mean a capacity. The having opportunities of seeing and serving her, he said, would reconcile him to any degradation of rank—to any loss, save that of honour.

"In truth, very pretty verses," said the lady-in-waiting, returning the poem to the queen; "but, methinks, somewhat over-bold."

"Why, I do think so too, Maria," replied Mary. "Chatelard rather forgets himself; but poets, you know, have a license, and I cannot be harsh to the poor young man. It would be cruel, ungenerous, and unworthy of me."

"But what say you, madam, to his request to be attached to your court?"

"Really, as to that, I know not well what to say, indeed," rejoined the queen. "Chatelard, you know, Maria, is a gentleman, both by birth and education. He is accomplished in a very high degree, and of a graceful person and

pleasing manners, and would thus do no discredit to our court; but, I fear me, he might be guilty of some indiscretions—for he is a child of passion as well as song—that might lead himself into danger, and bring some blame on me. Still, I cannot think of rejecting altogether his humble suit, so prettily preferred; and, if he would promise to conduct himself with becoming gravity and reserve in all matters, and at all times, I should have no objection that he was attached to our court. I will, at all events, make trial of him for a short space.”

Having said this, the queen, now addressing the ladies present generally, went on—

“Ladies, I will shortly introduce to you a new gallant; but I pray ye take care of your hearts; for he is, I warrant ye, one especially given to purloining these little commodities. He is handsome, accomplished, and a poet; so mind ye, ladies, I have warned you—be on your guard. Kerr,” she now called out to a page in waiting, “go to the hostelry whence this letter came, and say to the gentleman by whom it has been sent, that we desire to see him forthwith. Let him accompany you, Kerr.”

The page instantly departed; and we will avail ourselves of his short absence on this mission, to say briefly who Chatelard was—what was his object in coming to the Scottish court—and of what nature were the fears which the queen expressed regarding him.

Chatelard, then, was a young French gentleman of rank, of rare accomplishments, and a poet of very considerable excellence. His seeking to attach himself to Mary’s court, was the result of a violent and unhappy attachment to her person; and her fears for him, proceeding from a suspicion of this attachment, were, that he would commit himself by some rash expression of his feelings. She was displeased with his presumptuous love, yet found she could not, as a woman, but look on it with pity and compassion and hence

her disposition to treat with kindness and affability its unhappy victim. Prudence, indeed, would certainly have dictated another course than what Mary pursued with Chatelard, in thus admitting him to her presence; but Mary's error here was an error of the heart, and more to be regretted than blamed.

In a short while after the messenger had been despatched with the invitation to Chatelard, the door of the queen's apartment was thrown wide open, and that person entered. His bow to the queen was exceedingly graceful; and not less so, though measured with scrupulous exactness in their expression of deference, were those he directed to her ladies. Chatelard's countenance was at this instant suffused with a blush, and it was evident he was under the excitement of highly-agitated feelings; but he lost not, for a moment, nor in the slightest degree, his presence of mind; neither did these feelings prevent him conducting himself at this interview with the most perfect propriety.

"Chatelard," said the queen, after the ceremonies of a first salutation were over, "I perceive you have lost none of your cunning in the gentle craft. These were really pretty lines you sent me—choice in expression, and melodiously arranged. I assure thee it is a very happy piece."

"How could it be otherwise, madam," replied Chatelard, bowing low, "with such a subject?"

"Nay, nay," said Mary, laughing and blushing at the same time, "I am no subject, Chatelard, but an anointed queen. Thou canst not make a subject of me."

Chatelard now in turn blushed, and said, smiling, "Your wit, madam, has thrown me out; but, avoiding this play on words, my position is good, undeniable. All men acknowledge it."

"Go to—go to, Chatelard—thou wert ever a flatterer. But 'tis a poet's trade. Thou art a dangerous flatterer, however; for thou dost praise so prettily that one cannot

suspect thy sincerity, nor be angry with thee, even when thou deservest that they should. But enough of this in the meantime. Thou mayst now retire; and I think the sooner the better, for the safety of these fair maidens' hearts, and your own peace of mind, which a longer stay might endanger. Our chamberlain will provide thee with suitable apartments, and see to thy wants. Mark," she added, laughingly, "we retain thee in our service in the capacity of our poet—of court poet—a high and honourable appointment; and thy reward shall be the smiles and approbation of these fair ladies—the beauty of all and each of whom I expect thou wilt forthwith embalm in immortal verse."

Chatelard, bowing, was now about to retire, when the queen, again addressing him, said, "We will send for thee again in the afternoon, to bear us company for awhile, when thou wilt please bring with thee some of thy newest and choicest madrigals."

Expressing a deep sense of the honour proposed to be conferred on him, of the queen's kind condescension, and avowing his devotedness to her service, Chatelard withdrew, and was provided with the promised apartments by the express orders of Mary herself. To these apartments we shall follow the enthusiastic but audacious lover. On being left alone, Chatelard again fell into one of those reveries which we have already described, and again launched into that strain of extravagant adulation which, on another occasion, we represented him as indulging in. Again he compared Mary, in his incoherent ravings, to everything that is beautiful in earth, sea, and sky; but comparing her to these only that he might assert how far she surpassed them. There were mingled, too, with his eulogiums, on this occasion, expressions of that imprudent passion which subsequently at once urged him to commit the most daring offences, and blinded him to their consequences. Poor Chatelard's ravings, in the instance of which we are just speaking, were

unconsciously uttered; but they were unfortunately loud enough to arrest the attention of the domestics, who were passing to and fro in the lobby into which the door of his apartment opened. These, attracted by his rapturous exclamations, listened, from time to time, at his door, and were highly amused with the rhapsodies of the imprudent poet. The latter, becoming more and more vehement, and, in proportion, more entertaining, the domestics finally gathered in a cluster around the door, to the number of six or eight, and, with suppressed laughter, overheard all that the excited and unguarded inmate chose to utter. That, however, was so incoherent, or at least of so high-flown a character, that the listeners could make nothing of it; and, as they could not, they immediately concluded it to be nonsense, and the speaker a madman. But there came one to the spot, at this unfortunate moment, who, with sharper intellect and more apt comprehension, at once discovered the meaning that lurked under the florid language of the poet's ill-timed soliloquies.

While the servants were crowded around the door of Chatelard's apartment, too intent on their amusement to notice the approach of any one, another party, we say, had advanced to within a few paces of where they stood. Here, with his arms folded across his breast, he had remained observed for several seconds, gazing with a look of surprise and displeasure on the merry group assembled around the poet's door. He was, however, at length discovered, when the knot of listeners instantly broke up in the greatest hurry and alarm.

"How now," exclaimed the unexpected intruder—a person of about thirty years of age, of rather slender form, of cold and haughty demeanour, and austere countenance—"How now?" he exclaimed, in a voice whose tones were naturally severe—"what means this idling?—what do ye all here, knaves, in place of attending to your duties?"

Instead of answering this question, the terrified domestics were now endeavouring to make off in all directions; but the querist's curiosity, or perhaps suspicion, having been excited by what he had seen, he instantly arrested their progress, by calling on them, in a voice of increased severity and vehemence, to stop.

"Come hither, Johnstone," he exclaimed, addressing one of the fugitives—"I must know what you have been all about." And, without waiting for an answer, "Who occupies this apartment?" he inquired, pointing to that in which was Chatelard.

"And please ye, my lord," replied Johnstone, bowing with the most profound respect—"ane that we think's no very wise. He's been bletherin awa there to himsel, saving yer honour's presence, like a bubbly-jock, for this half-hour back, and we can neither mak tap, tail, nor mane o' what he's sayin."

"What! a madman, Johnstone?" said the Earl of Murray, the queen's half-brother, for it was no less a personage; then hurriedly added, "Who is he?—what is he?—where is he from?—when came he hither?"

The man answered categorically—

"I dinna ken, my lord, wha he is; but, frae the thinness o' his chafts, I tak him to be ane o' your French laun-loupers. He cam to the palace about twa hours syne."

The earl's curiosity was now still further excited, and, without saying a word more, he drew near to the door of Chatelard's apartment, and became also an auditor of the poor poet's unguarded language; but not such as it was in the case of the listeners who had preceded him; to him that language was perfectly intelligible—at least to the extent of informing him of Chatelard's ambitious love. To Murray this was a secret worth knowing; and, in the hope that he might discover this attachment to be reciprocal, and thus acquire an additional influence over the queen, his sister,

at the expense of her reputation, he considered it a singularly fortunate incident. Perhaps he expected that it would do even more for him than this: that it would eventually help him to the accomplishment of certain daring views towards the crown itself, of which he was not unsuspected. Whether, however, he was able to trace, in distinct and definite lines, any consequences favourable to himself from the fact which had just come to his knowledge, it is certain he was pleased with the discovery, and considered it as an important acquisition. That he viewed it in this light, indeed, was evident even by his countenance, cautiously guarded as its expressions ever were.

On being satisfied of the fact of Chatelard's attachment to the queen, he withdrew from the door with a look and brief expression of satisfaction, and went directly in quest of the chamberlain. On finding whom—

"So, Mr Chamberlain," he said, "we have got, I find, another animal added to our herd of fawning, drivelling courtiers. Pray, who or what is he, this person who has taken up his quarters in the northern gallery, and by whose authority has he been installed there?"

"By the queen's, my lord," replied the chamberlain. "I have had express and direct orders from the queen herself, to provide the gentleman with apartments in the palace, and to see to his suitable entertainment."

"Ah, indeed," said the earl, biting his lip, and musing for a moment. "By her own express orders!" he repeated. "It is very well." Then, after a pause—"Know ye this favoured person's name, Mr Chamberlain?"

"Chatelard," replied the latter.

"Chatelard! Chatelard!" repeated the earl, mechanically, and again musing; "why, I think I have heard of that gallant before. He is one of those triflers called poets, methinks—a versifier, a scribbler of jingling rhymes. Is it not so?"

"I have heard the queen say so, my lord," replied the chamberlain. "She has spoken of him in my hearing as a poet."

"Ah! the same, the same," said the earl; "but how obtained he access to the queen, know ye?"

"Through his own direct application, my lord. He addressed a poetical epistle to her majesty, I understand, from Goodal's hostelry, where he had taken up his quarters in the first place, requesting permission to wait upon her."

"And it was granted?" interrupted the earl.

"It was, my lord; and he has already had an audience."

"Ah! so!" said the earl, without yet betraying, or having, during any part of this conversation, betrayed, the slightest emotion or symptom of the deep interest he took in the communications which were being made to him. "Know ye," he went on, "if that favour is to be soon again conferred on him? When will he again be admitted to the presence?"

"That, my lord, rests on the queen's pleasure; but I hear say that he is to attend her again this evening in her sitting apartment."

"So, so," said the earl, nodding his head, as he uttered the words. And, turning on his heel, he walked away without further remark.

From the officer with whom he had just been speaking, the Earl of Murray carefully concealed the motives which had prompted his inquiries, but determined, henceforth, to watch with the utmost vigilance the proceedings of the queen and Chatelard, until some circumstance should occur that might put them both fairly within his power. Unaware of the dangerous surveillance under which he was already placed, it was with a delight which only he himself perhaps could feel, that Chatelard received, in the evening, the promised invitation from the queen to attend her and her ladies in their sitting chamber. The invitation was conveyed in some playful verses—an art in which Mary

excelled — written on embossed paper. The enthusiastic poet read the delightful lines a thousand times over, dwelt with rapture on each word and phrase, and finally kissed the precious document with all the eagerness and fervour of a highly-excited and uncontrollable passion. Having indulged in these tender sensibilities for some time, Chatelard at length folded up the unconscious object of his adoration, thrust it into his bosom, took up a small *portfeuille*, covered with red morocco leather, gilt, and embossed, the depository of his poetical effusions, and hurried to the apartment of the queen, where he was speedily set to the task of reading his compositions, for the entertainment of the assembled fair ones; and it is certain that on more than one of them the tender and impassioned manner of the bard, as he recited his really beautiful verses, added to his highly prepossessing appearance and graceful delivery, made an impression by no means favourable to their night's repose. It would, however, perhaps be more tedious than interesting to the reader, were we to detail all that passed on the night in question in the queen's apartment; to record all the witty and pleasant things that were said and done by the queen, her ladies, and her poet. Be it enough to say, that the latter retired at a pretty late hour; his imprudent passion, we cannot say increased—for of increase it would not admit—but strengthened in its wild and ambitious hopes.

From that fatal night, poor Chatelard firmly believed that his love was returned—that he had inspired in the bosom of Mary a passion as ardent as his own. Into this unhappy error the poet's own heated and disturbed imagination had betrayed him, by representing in the light of special marks of favour, occurrences that were merely the emanations of a kind and gentle nature—thus fatally misled by a passion which, if notorious for occasioning groundless fears, is no less so for inspiring unfounded hopes.

Such, at any rate, was its effect in the case of Chatelard on the night in question. On gaining his own chamber, he flung himself into a chair, and spent nearly the whole of the remainder of the night in the indulgence of the wildest and most extravagant dreams of future bliss; for, in the blindness of his passion and tumult of his hopes, he saw no dangers, and feared no difficulties.

From this time forward, Chatelard's conduct to the queen became so marked and unguarded in various particulars, as to excite her alarm, and even to draw down upon the offender some occasional rebukes, although these were at first sufficiently gentle and remote. Nor did the imprudences of the infatuated poet escape the cold, keen eye of Murray. He saw them, and noted them; but took care to wear the semblance of unconsciousness. It was not his business to interrupt, by hinting suspicions, the progress of an affair which he hoped would, on some occasion or other, lead to consequences that he might turn to account. Feeling this, it was not for him to help Chatelard and the queen to elude his vigilance, and defeat his views, by discovering what he observed, and thus putting them on their guard. This was not his business; but it was his business to lie concealed, and to spring out on his quarry the instant that its position invited to the effort. Coldly and sternly, therefore, he watched the motions of Chatelard and his sister; but was little satisfied to perceive nothing in the conduct of the latter regarding the former which at all spoke of the feelings he secretly desired to find. As it was impossible, however, for the earl personally to watch all the movements of Chatelard, he looked around him for some individual of the queen's household whom he might bribe to perform the duties of a spy; and such a one he found amongst the attendants whom Mary had brought with her from France, of which country he was also a native. The name of this ungrateful and despicable wretch, who under-

took to betray a kind and generous mistress, whenever he should discover anything in her conduct to betray, was Choisseul—a man of pleasing manners and address, but of low and vicious habits. Without any certain knowledge of his character, or any previous information regarding him, the Earl of Murray's singular tact and penetration at once singled him out as a likely person for his purposes. On this presumption, he sent for him, and, cautiously and gradually opening him up, found that he had judged correctly of his man.

"Choisseul," he said, on that person being ushered into his presence, "I have good reason to think that you are one in whom I may put trust; and, in this assurance, I have selected you for an especial mark of my confidence. Do you know anything of this Chatelard, who has lately come to court?"

"I do, my lor'. He is countryman of my own."

"So I understand. Well, then, I'll tell you what it is, Choisseul: I believe the fellow has come here for no good—I believe, in short, that he has designs upon the queen. Now, my good fellow, will you undertake to ascertain this for me? Will you watch their proceedings, watch them narrowly, and give me instant information of anything suspicious that may come to your knowledge—and ye shall not miss of your reward?" added the earl, now opening a little desk which stood before him, and taking from it a well-filled purse.

Choisseul, with many bows and grimaces, readily undertook to play the knave, and, with still more, took the price of his knavery, the purse already alluded to, which the earl now handed him.

"Now, Choisseul," said Murray, just before dismissing the miscreant, "I may depend on you?"

"Mine honneur," replied the Frenchman, placing his hand on his breast, with a theatrical air, and bowing to the

ground as he pronounced the words—"Je suis votre serviteur till die."

"Enough," said the earl, waving his hand as a signal to him to retire; "be vigilant and prompt in communicating with me when you have anything of consequence to say."

Choisseul again bowed low, and left the apartment. In the meantime, the gallant, accomplished, but imprudent Chatelard, hurried blindly along by the impetuosity of his passion, and altogether unsettled by the intoxicating belief that his love was returned—a belief which had now taken so fast a hold of his understanding that nothing could loosen it—proceeded from one impropriety to another, till he at length committed one which all but brought matters to a crisis; and this was avoided only by its having escaped the vigilance of Choisseul, and having been compassionately concealed by the queen herself.

On retiring one night, early in February, 1563, to her sleeping apartment, Mary and her attendants were suddenly alarmed by an extraordinary movement in a small closet or wardrobe, in which was kept the clothes the queen was in the habit of daily using. The maids would have screamed out and fled from the apartment, but were checked in both these feminine resorts by observing the calm and collected manner of their mistress, in which there was not the slightest appearance of perturbation.

"Ladies, ladies," she exclaimed, laughingly, as her attendants were about to rush out of the room, "what a pretty pair of heroines ye are! Shame, shame! ye surely would not leave your mistress alone, in the midst of such a perilous adventure as this. Come hither," she added, at the same time stepping towards her toilet, and taking up a small silver lamp that burned on it, "and let us see who this intruder is—whether ghost or gallant."

Saying this—her maids having returned, reassured by her intrepidity—she proceeded, with steady step, towards the

suspected closet, seized the door by the handle, flung it boldly open, and discovered, to the astonished eyes of her attendants, and to her own inexpressible amazement, the poet Chatelard, armed with sword and dagger. For some seconds the queen uttered not a syllable; but a flush of indignation and of insulted pride suffused her exquisitely lovely countenance.

"Chatelard," she at length said, in a tone of calm severity, and with a dignity of manner becoming her high state and lineage, "come forth and answer for this daring and atrocious conduct, this unheard-of insolence and presumption." Chatelard obeyed, and was about to throw himself at her feet, when she sternly forbade him.

"I want no apologies, presumptuous man," she said—"no craving of forgiveness. I want explanation of this infamous proceeding, and that I demand of you in the presence of my attendants here. Know ye not, sir," she went on, "that your head is forfeited by this offence, and that I have but to give the word, and the forfeit will be exacted?"

"I know it, I know it," exclaimed Chatelard, persisting in throwing himself on his knees; "but the threat has no terrors for me. It is your displeasure alone—fairest, brightest of God's creatures—that I fear. It is ——"

"Peace, Chatelard," interrupted Mary, peremptorily. "What mean ye by this language, sir? Would ye cut yourself off from all hope of pardon, by adding offence upon offence? Rise, sir, and leave this apartment instantly, I command you; I will now hear neither explanation nor apology."

"Then, will you forgive me?" said Chatelard; "will you forgive a presumption of which ——"

"I will hear no more, sir," again interrupted the queen, indignantly. "Begone, sir! Remain another instant, and I give the alarm. Your life depends on your obedience."

And Mary placed her hand on a small silver bell, from which had she drawn the slightest sound, the poet's doom was sealed, and she would have rung his funeral knell.

Chatelard now slowly rose from his knees, folded his arms across his breast, and with downcast look, but without uttering another word, strode out of the apartment. When he had gone, the queen, no longer supported by the excitement occasioned by the presence of the intruder, flung herself into a chair, greatly agitated and deadly pale. Here she sat in silence for several minutes, evidently employed in endeavouring to obtain a view of the late singular occurrence in all its bearings, and in determining on the course which she herself ought to pursue regarding it.

Having seemingly satisfied herself on these points—

“Ladies,” she at length said—these ladies were two of her Maries, Mary Livingstone and Mary Fleeming—“this is a most extraordinary circumstance. Rash, thoughtless, presumptuous man, how could he have been so utterly lost to every sense of propriety and of his own peril, as to think of an act of such daring insolence?”

“Poor man, I pity him,” here simply, but naturally enough, perhaps, interrupted Mary Fleeming. “Doubtless, madam, you will report the matter instantly to the earl?”

“Nay, Mary, I know not if I will, after all,” replied the queen. “I perhaps ought to do so; but methinks it would be hardly creditable to me, as a woman, to bring this poor thoughtless young man to the scaffold, whither, you know, my stern brother would have him instantly dragged, if he knew of his offence; and besides, ladies,” went on the queen, in whose gentle bosom the kindly feelings of her nature had now completely triumphed over those of insulted dignity and pride, “I know not how far I am myself to blame in this matter. I fear me, I ought to have been more guarded in my conduct towards this infatuated young man. I

should have kept him at a greater distance, and been more cautious of admitting him to familiar converse, since he has evidently misconstrued our affability and condescension. There may have been error there, you see, ladies."

"Yet," said Mary Livingstone, "methinks the daring insolence of the man ought not to go altogether unpunished, madam. If he has chosen to misconstrue, it can be no fault of yours."

"Perhaps not," replied Mary. "As a queen, I certainly ought to give him up to the laws; but as a woman I cannot. Yet shall he not go unpunished. He shall be forthwith banished from our court and kingdom. To-morrow I shall cause it to be intimated to him that he leave our court instantly, and Scotland within four-and-twenty hours thereafter, on pain of our highest displeasure, and peril of disclosure of his crime."

Having thus spoken, and having obtained a promise of secrecy regarding Chatelard's offence from her two attendants, Mary retired for the night, not however, quite assured that she was pursuing the right course for her own reputation, in thus screening the guilt of the poet; but nevertheless determined, at all risks, to save him, in this instance at least, from the consequence of his indiscretion. On the following morning, the queen despatched a note to Chatelard, to the purpose which we have represented her as expressing on the preceding night, and, in obedience to the command it contained, he instantly left the palace, but in a state of indescribable mental agitation and distraction; for in the determination expressed by the queen he saw at once an end to all his wild hopes, and more unendurable still, an assurance that he had wholly mistaken the feelings with which Mary regarded him. We have said that Chatelard obeyed one of the injunctions of the queen—that was, to leave the palace instantly. He did so; but whether he conformed to the other the sequel will show.

Two days after the occurrences just related, Mary set out for St. Andrew's; taking the route of the Queensferry, and sleeping the first night at Dunfermline, and the second at Burntisland. On the evening of her arrival at the latter place, the queen, fatigued by her journey, which had been prolonged by hunting and hawking, retired early to her apartment. Here she had not been many minutes, when the door was thrown suddenly open, and Chatelard entered.

"What! again, Chatelard!" exclaimed Mary, with the utmost indignation and astonishment. "What means this, sir? How have you dared to intrude yourself again into my apartment?"

Without making any reply to this salutation, Chatelard threw himself on his knees before the queen, and, seizing the skirt of her robe, implored her pardon for his presumption; adding, that he had been impelled to this second intrusion solely by a desire to explain to her the motives of his former conduct, which, he said, had been wrongly interpreted, and to bid her farewell before he went into the banishment to which she had doomed him.

"Rise, sir, rise," said Mary; "I will listen to no explanations forced on me in this extraordinary manner. I desire that you instantly quit this apartment. This repetition of your offence, sir, I will neither bear with nor overlook. Rise, I command you, and begone!"

Instead of obeying, the infatuated poet not only persisted in remaining in the position he was in, but, still keeping hold of the queen's robe, began to speak the language of passion and love. The queen endeavoured to release herself from his hold, and was in the act of attempting to do so, when the door of the apartment, which Chatelard had closed behind him, was violently thrown open, and the Earl of Murray entered. Having advanced two or three steps, he stood still, and, folding his arms across his breast, looked

sternly, but in silence, first at the queen, and then at Chatelard; keeping, at the same time, sufficiently near the door to prevent the escape of the latter, in case he should make such an attempt. Having gazed on them for some time without opening his lips, but with an ominous expression of countenance—

“Well, Sir Poet,” he at length said, addressing Chatelard, with cold deliberation, “pray do me the favour to enlighten me as to the meaning of your having thus intruded yourself into the queen’s apartment. Why do I find you here, sir, and wherefore have I found you in the position from which you have just now risen? Pray, sir, explain.”

“I came here, my lord,” replied Chatelard, with firmness and dignity, “to take leave of Her Majesty before returning to France, for which I set out to-morrow.”

An ironical and incredulous smile played on the stern countenance of Murray. “A strange place this, methinks, and a strange season, for leave-taking; and yet stranger than all the language in which I just now heard you speak. You are aware, I presume, sir,” he added, “that you are just now in the queen’s sleeping apartment, where none dare intrude but on the peril of their lives. But probably, madam,” he said, now turning to the queen, without waiting any reply to his last remark, “you can explain the meaning of this extraordinary scene.”

“You had better, my lord,” replied Mary, evasively—for she was still reluctant to commit the unfortunate poet—“obtain what explanations you desire from Chatelard himself. He surely is the fittest person to explain his own conduct.”

“True, madam,” said Murray, sneeringly, “but I thought it not by any means improbable that you might be as well informed on the point in question as the gentleman himself.”

“Your insinuation is rude, my lord,” replied the queen.

haughtily; and, without vouchsafing any other remark, walked away to the further end of the apartment, leaving the earl and Chatelard together.

Murray now saw, from the perfectly composed and independent manner of the queen, that he could make out nothing to her prejudice from the case before him, nor elicit the slightest evidence of anything like connivance, on the part of Mary, at Chatelard's intrusion. Seeing this, he determined on proceeding against the unfortunate poet with the utmost rigour to which his imprudence had exposed him, in the hope that severity would wring from him such confessions as would implicate the queen.

Having come to this resolution—"Sir," he said, addressing Chatelard, "prepare to abide the consequences of your presumption." And he proceeded to the door, called an attendant, and desired him to send the captain of the guard and a party to him instantly.

In a few minutes, they appeared, when the earl, addressing the officer just named, and pointing to Chatelard, desired him to put that gentleman in ward; and the latter was immediately hurried out of the apartment. When the guard, with their prisoner, had left the queen's chamber, the earl walked up to Mary, who, with her head leaning pensively on her hand, had been silently contemplating the proceedings that were going forward in her apartment.

"Madam," said Murray, on approaching her, "I think you may consider yourself in safety for this night, at any rate, from any further intrusion from this itinerant versifier; and it shall be my fault if he ever again annoys you or any one else."

"What, brother!" exclaimed Mary, in evident alarm at this ambiguous, but ominous hint—"you will not surely proceed to extremities against the unfortunate young man?"

"By St Bride, but I will though," replied Murray, angrily.

“Why, madam, has not your reputation as a woman, and your dignity as a queen, both been assailed by this insolent foreigner, in the daring act he has done?”

“Nay, my lord,” replied the queen, haughtily, “methinks it will take much more than this to affect my reputation. I indeed marvel much to hear you speak thus, my lord. My dignity, again, can be debased only by mine own acts, and cannot be affected by the act of another.”

“Nevertheless, madam,” rejoined her brother, “ye cannot stop slanderous tongues; and I know not how the world may construe this circumstance. Both your honour and station require that this presumptuous knave suffer the penalty of his crime in its utmost rigour. What would the world say else? Why, it would have suspicions that ought not for an instant to be associated with the name of Mary Stuart.”

“But you will not have his life taken, brother?” said Mary, in a gentle tone—subdued by the thoughts of the severe doom that threatened the unfortunate gentleman, and placing her hand affectionately on the earl’s arm as she spoke. “Can ye not banish him forth of the realm, or imprison him—anything short of death, which, methinks, would be, after all, hard measure for the offence?”

“You have reasons, doubtless, madam,” said the earl, coldly and bluntly, “for this tenderness.”

“I have,” said Mary, indignantly; “but not, my lord, such as you would seem to insinuate. My reasons are, humanity and a feeling of compassion for the misguided and unhappy youth.”

“Chatelard shall have such mercy, madam, as your Majesty’s Privy Council may deem him deserving of,” replied the earl, turning round on his heel, and quitting the apartment.

On leaving the presence of the queen, the Earl of Murray retired to his own chamber where he was, shortly after.

waited upon by Choisseul, who had been for some time watching his return.

“Ha, Choisseul ! art there ?” said the earl, with an unusual expression of satisfaction on his countenance, on the former’s entrance. “Thou hast done well, friend : I found matters exactly as you stated, and am obliged by the promptness and accuracy of your information.”

“Vere happy, my lor’, I am serve to your satisfaction,” replied Choisseul, bowing low. “I vas vatch Monsieur Chatelard as vone cat shall vatch vone leetle mice, and did caught him at las.”

“You did well, Choisseul, and shall be suitably recompensed. Dost know how the fellow came here, and when ?”

“He did come in vone leetle barque, my lor’ from over de riviere, on de todder side opposite.”

“Ah, so !” said the earl. “Well, you may now retire, Choisseul. To-morrow I shall see to your reward.”

Choisseul bowed, and withdrew.

When he had retired, the earl sat down to a small writing table, and, late as the hour was, began writing with great assiduity—an employment at which he continued until he had written eight or ten different letters, each of considerable length. These were addressed to various members of the Queen’s Privy Council in Edinburgh, and to some of the law officers of the crown. They were all nearly copies of each other, and contained an account of Chatelard’s conduct, with a charge to the several parties addressed to repair to St. Andrews on the second day following, for the purpose of holding a court on the offender, and awarding him such punishment as the case might seem to demand.

On the day succeeding that on which the occurrence just related took place, the queen and her retinue proceeded to St. Andrews, whither the prisoner Chatelard was also carried; and, on the next again, the unfortunate gentleman was brought to trial, the scene of which was an apartment

in the Castle of St Andrews, which had been hastily prepared for the occasion. In the centre of this apartment was placed a large oblong oaken table, covered with crimson velvet, and surrounded by a circle of high-backed chairs, with cushions covered with the same material. These were subsequently occupied by eight or ten persons of the Privy Council, including Mary's secretary of state, Maitland of Lethington, who sat at one end of the table. At the opposite end sat the Earl of Murray; the prisoner occupying a place in the centre at one of the sides. During the investigation which followed into the offence of Chatelard, the Earl of Murray made repeated indirect attempts to lead him to make statements prejudicial to the queen; urging him, with a show of candour and pretended regard for justice, to inform the court of anything and everything which he thought might be available in his defence, without regard to the rank or condition of those whom such statements might implicate. This language was too plain to be misunderstood. Every one present perceived that it conveyed a pointed allusion to the queen. Chatelard, amongst the rest, felt that it did so, and indignantly repelled the insinuation.

"I have none," he said, "to accuse but myself; nothing to blame but my own folly. Folly, did I say?" went on the fearless enthusiast; "it was no folly—it was love, love, love—all-powerful love—love for her, the noblest, the loveliest of created beings, for whom I could die ten thousand deaths. It was love for her who has been to me the breath of life, the light of mine eyes, the idol of my heart; around which were entwined all the feelings and susceptibilities of my nature, even as the ivy entwines the tree—the constant theme of my dreams by night; the sole subject of my thoughts by day. It has been hinted to me that I may blame freely, where to blame may serve me. But whom shall I blame? Not her, surely, who is the object of my

idolatry—my sun, moon, and stars—my heaven, my soul, my existence. Not her, surely; for she is faultless as the unborn babe, pure and spotless as the snow-wreath in the hollow of the mountain. Who shall maintain the contrary lies in his throat, and is a foul-mouthed, villanous slanderer.”

Here the enthusiastic and somewhat incoherent speaker was abruptly interrupted by Maitland of Lethington, who, rising to his feet, and resting his hands on the low table around which Chatelard's judges were seated, said, looking at the prisoner—

“Friend, ye must speak to your defence, if ye would speak at all. This that you have said is nothing to the purpose; and you cannot be permitted to take up the time of this court with such rhapsodies as these, that make not for any point of your accusation. Think ye not so, my lords?” he added, glancing around the table.

Several nods of assent spoke acquiescence. When Maitland had concluded—

“I have done, then, my lords,” said Chatelard, bowing, and seating himself. “I have no more to say.”

A short conversation now took place amongst the prisoner's judges, when sentence of death was unanimously agreed to, and he was ordered to be beheaded on the following day, the 22d of February, 1563.

On the rising of the court, the Earl of Murray repaired to the queen, and informed her of the doom awarded against Chatelard. Mary was greatly affected by the intelligence. She burst into tears, exclaiming—

“Oh, unhappy, thrice unhappy, countenance! thou hast been given me for a curse, instead of a blessing—the ruin of those who love me best—that, by inspiring a silly passion, at once dangerous and worthless, will not permit one to remain near me in the character of friend! My lord, my lord,” she continued, in great agitation, “can you not,

will you not save the unhappy young man ? I beseech thee, I implore thee, by the ties of consanguinity that connect us, by the duty ye owe to me as thy sovereign, to spare his life !”

“You know not what you ask, madam,” replied Murray, stalking up and down the apartment. “How can his life be spared consistently with your honour ? Save him, and you will set a thousand slanderous tongues a-wagging. It may not, must not, be.”

Mary herself could not deny the force of this remark, and, finding she had nothing to oppose to it, she flung herself into a chair, and again burst into tears. In this condition the earl left her, to give orders respecting the execution of Chatelard on the following day, and to put another proceeding in train for obtaining that result which he had aimed at on the trial of the unfortunate young man. Sending again for Choisseul—

“Friend,” he said, on that person’s entering the apartment, “I wish another small piece of service at your hands.”

Choisseul bowed, and expressed his readiness to do anything he might be required to do.

“I was proud to discharge all de drops of my blood in your service, my lor’,” said the knave, with a profound obeisance.

The earl carelessly nodded approbation.

“To-night, then, Choisseul,” he went on, “you will repair to the dungeon in which Chatelard is confined. You will see him as a friend. You understand me ?”

“Ah, well, my lor’, vere well.”

“Just so. Well, then, you will hint to him that you have reason to believe he might yet save his life by confessing a participation in his guilt on the part of the queen. You may add, though not as from me, of course, that I have no doubt of his having been encouraged to those

liberties for which his life is forfeited ; and you may say that you know I feel for him, and would readily procure his pardon, if he would only give me a reasonable ground or pretext for doing so, by showing that there were *others* equally in fault with him. Do you entirely understand me, Choisseul ?”

“Entirely, my lor’,” replied the latter ; “bright, clear, as noonday at the sun.”

“So, then, return to me when you have seen Chatelard, and let me know the result,” said the earl.

Choisseul once more withdrew, to perform the treacherous and knavish part assigned him. About midnight he sought the dungeon of the unhappy gentleman, and, having been admitted by the guards, found him busily employed in writing ; the indulgence of a lamp, with pen, ink, and paper, having, at his most earnest request, been afforded him. Indeed, these were more readily and willingly given than he was aware of. They were given in the hope that he would commit something to writing which, without his intending it, might compromise the character of the queen. But in this her enemies were disappointed.

On Choisseul’s entering Chatelard’s dungeon, the latter, as we have already said, was busily engaged in writing. He was inditing a last farewell to the queen in verse. On this employment he was so intent, that he did not observe, or at least pay any attention to, the entrance of Choisseul, but continued writing on till he had completed his task, which now, however, occupied only a very few minutes. On finishing—

“’Tis done,” he said, and threw down his pen with violence on the table. “These are the last notes of the harp of Chatelard. Ha, Choisseul !” he immediately added, and only now for the first time seeming conscious of that person’s presence ; “I am glad to see you, my countryman. This is kind. I thought there were none in this strange

land to care for me. But they shall see, Choisseul," he added, proudly, "how a Frenchman and a poet can die. That is, boldly and bravely. He were no true poet whose soul was not elevated above the fear of death. I said, my friend," he went on, after a momentary pause, and sighing deeply as he spoke, "that I thought there were none in this land to care for me, or to sorrow for me—and perhaps it is so; but there is one, Choisseul, whom I would not willingly believe indifferent to my fate. She surely, much as I have offended her, will say, 'Poor Chatelard!' Nay, methinks I see a tear standing in that peerless eye, when she recalls the memory of her departed poet. That—that, Choisseul," said the unhappy captive, with an enthusiasm which even the near approach of death had not been able to abate—"that would be something worth dying for!"

Choisseul smiled.

"You hold your life lightly, indeed, Chatelard," he said, speaking in his native language, "if you think its loss compensated by a woman's tear."

"Ah, Choisseul, but such a woman!" exclaimed Chatelard.

"Well, well," replied the former, again smiling; "but you can have no doubt that *she* at least will regret your death. *She* loved you too well not to deplore your fate."

"Did she?" exclaimed Chatelard, eagerly, and with such a look of inquiry and doubt as greatly disappointed the asserter. "You know who I mean, then; but how know ye that which you have just now said? Assure me that ye speak true, Choisseul, and I shall die happy."

"Ah, bah! you know it yourself, my friend, better than I," replied the latter. "No use in concealing it now," he added, with an intelligent look.

"Concealing what, sir?" said Chatelard, in a tone of mingled surprise and displeasure.

"Why, the affection the queen entertained for you," re-

plied Choisseul. "We all know, my friend, you would not have done what you did, had she not encouraged your addresses. And I'll tell you what, Chatelard," he went on, "I have reason to believe that your life would yet be spared, if you would only show that this was so."

"Ah, I understand you," said Chatelard, with suppressed passion. "If I will accuse the queen—if I will put her in the power of her enemies—her enemies will be obliged to me. In other words, I may save my life by sacrificing her reputation; and it would be little matter whether what I said should be true or not. Is it not so, Choisseul?" Then, without waiting for an answer—"Villain, devil that thou art," he exclaimed, now suddenly giving full swing to the passion that had been raised within him, "how hast thou dared to come to me with such an infamous proposal as this? Didst think, most dastardly knave, that my soul was as mean as thine own? Begone, begone, ruffian! Thy presence, thy breath, pollutes my dungeon more than the fetid damps that exhale from its walls—more than the noxious reptiles that crawl on its floor. Begone! begone, I say!" And he seized the now trembling caitiff by the throat, and dashed him against the door of the cell, with a violence that instantly brought in the guards who were stationed on the outside. These, seeing how matters stood, hurried Choisseul out of the dungeon, and again secured the door on its unfortunate inmate.

On leaving Chatelard, Choisseul repaired to the Earl of Murray, but with infinitely less confidence in his looks and manner than on the former occasion when his villany had been successful. To the earl he detailed the particulars of his interview with Chatelard; not forgetting to mention the rough treatment he had received from the infuriated poet.

"Then he'll confess nothing, Choisseul?" said Murray, when the former had done speaking.

“Not anything at all, my lor’. Dere is no hope ; for I make no more of dying than I do of taking vone little pinch of snuff.”

“Obstinate fool,” exclaimed the earl, evidently chagrined and disappointed. “Let him die, then ! You may retire, Choisseul,” he abruptly added.

Choisseul obeyed.

“His execution, at any rate, shall be public,” said the earl to himself, when the latter had left him. ‘Perhaps he may make some confession on the scaffold, and it will be well to have it amply testified.’”

On the following day, Chatelard was led out to execution, when his gentleman-like appearance and noble bearing excited the utmost sympathy of the crowd. On ascending the scaffold, he pulled a small volume from his pocket, opened it, and read aloud, with great dignity and composure, Ronsard’s Hymn on Death. When he had done, he turned towards that part of the Castle of St Andrew’s where he supposed the queen to be, and, kissing his hand, waved a graceful adieu, exclaiming— ‘Farewell, loveliest and most cruel princess whom the world contains !’”

Having uttered these words, he laid his head, with the utmost composure, on the block. The axe of the executioner fell, and the high-souled, accomplished, but enthusiastic Chatelard was no more.

CHRISTIE OF THE CLEEK.

THOUGH the records of history and everyday experience teach us that human nature, when pressed beyond certain limits by the force of stern necessity, loses all trace of the lineaments of the lord of the creation, and degenerates as far below the grade of brute existence as it is, when not subjected to any such power, above it; yet it is remarkable how determinedly mankind cling to a sceptical incredulity in regard to those facts which derogate, in a very great degree, from the dignity of the character of their species. The story of Christiecleek has been considered by many as only fit for being, what it has been for five hundred years, a nursery bugbear, and yet it is narrated by Winton, one of the least credulous of historians, was attended by circumstances rendering it highly probable at the time, and has been corroborated by instances of *civilised* cannibalism, produced by necessity, in cases of shipwreck, of almost yearly occurrence.

The united powers of war and famine, which have so often poured forth their fury on the devoted head of poor Scotland, at no time exhibited greater malignity than in the beginning of the reign of David II. For about fifty years, the country had scarcely ever enjoyed a year of quiet—with, perhaps, the exception of a short period of the reign of Bruce. Repeatedly swept from one end to the other by the invading armies of the Edwards, carrying the sword and the faggot in every direction, she was, on the very instant of the departure of the foreign foes (in all cases starved out of a burned and devastated land), laid hold of by the harpies of intestine wars. The strong resilient energies of the country

could have thrown off the effects of one attack, however severe and however protracted; but a series of incursions of the same disease, at intervals allowing of no time for recruiting her powers, produced a political marasmus—a confirmed famine—one of the most dreadful evils, including in itself all others, that ever was visited on mankind.

It would be difficult to draw a picture—because imagination falls short of the powers of a proper portraiture—of the misery and desolation of Scotland at the time we have mentioned. The land had got gradually out of cultivation, and the herds of black cattle and sheep, on which the people relied, in default of the productive powers of agriculture, had been either driven into England, or consumed by the myriads of soldiers of the English invading armies. Great numbers of the people, having nothing wherewith to allay the pangs of hunger, though they had plenty of money, quitted their country in despair, and took refuge in Flanders. Those who had no money to pay their passage, left their homes, and betook themselves to the woods, where, to appease their agonies, they lay on the ground, and devoured, like the inhabitants of their sties, the acorns and the nuts that had fallen from the trees. In the want of these, the very branches were laid hold of and gnawed; and many poor creatures were found lying dead, with the half-masticated boughs in their clenched hands. The only remedial influence that was experienced, was the growth of dysenteries and other intestine diseases, which, produced by hunger and becoming epidemic, kindly swept off thousands who would otherwise have died of protracted famine.

At a wild spot near the Grampian Hills, a number of destitute beings had collected, for the purpose of catching deer (a few of which still remained), to keep in the spark of life. They agreed to associate together, and divide their prey, which was dressed in a mountain cave, where they had assembled. Every morning they sallied forth, women and all,

on the dreadful errand of taking advantage of chance, in supplying them with any species of wild animals that came in their way, to satisfy the imperative demands of hunger. They got a few creatures at first, consisting chiefly of hares and foxes, and occasionally wolves, as ferocious and hungry as their captors; and such was the extremity to which they were often reduced, that they sat down on the spot where the animals were caught, divided the smoking limbs among their number, and devoured them without any culinary preparation.

This supply very soon ceased—the animals in the neighbourhood having either been consumed or frightened away to more inaccessible places. The wretched beings, like others in their situation, had recourse to the woods for acorns; but the time of the year had passed, and no nuts were to be found. Weakness preyed on their limbs; and several of their number, unable longer to go in search of food, which was nowhere to be found, lay on the floor of the cavern in the agonies of a hunger which their stronger companions, concerned for their own fate, would not alleviate. All ties between the members of the association began to give way before the despair of absolute famine. They ceased all personal communication; silence, feeding on the morbid forms of misery called up by diseased imaginations, reigned throughout the society of skeletons, and hollow eyes, which spoke unutterable things, glanced through the gloom of the cavern, where a glimmering fire, on which they had, for a time, prepared the little meat they had procured, was still kept up, by adding a few pieces of wood from the neighbouring forest. No notice was taken of each other's agonies, nor could the groans which mixed and sounded with a hollow noise through the dark recess, have been distinguished by the ear of sympathy; an occasional scream from a female sufferer who experienced a paroxysm of more than her ordinary agony, was only cap-

able of fixing the attention for an instant, till individual pain laid hold again of the tortured feelings.

A person of the name of Andrew Christie, a butcher, originally from Perth, had endeavoured, at first, to organise the society, with a view to save himself and his fellow-sufferers. He was a strong, hardy man; and, if any of the number could be said to retain a small portion of self-command, in the midst of the horrible scene of suffering which surrounded them, it was this man. He was still able to walk, though with difficulty, and continued to feed the fire, going out occasionally and seizing on grubs that were to be found about the mouth of the cavern. The others were unable to follow his example, and even he latterly was unfitted for his loathsome search. All were now nearly in the same predicament: agony and despair reigned throughout, to the exclusion of a single beam of hope of any one ever again visiting the haunts of man. At Christie's side a woman ceased to groan; an intermission of agony was a circumstance, and the only circumstance to be remarked. The thought struck him she was dead; he laid his hand upon her mouth to be assured of the fact; she was no more! The dead body was a talisman in the temple of misery—in a short time, that body was gone!

The Rubicon of the strongest of natural prejudices was passed, with the goading furies of hunger and despair behind. A prejudice overcome is an acquisition of liberty, though it may be for evil. The death of the woman had saved them all from death; but the efficacy of the salvation would postpone a similar course of relief. Christie saw the predicament of his friends, and proposed in the hollow, husky voice of starvation, that one of their number should die by lot, and that then, having recovered strength, they should proceed to the mountain pass and procure victims.

This oration was received with *groans*, meant to be of applause. The lot of death fell on another woman, who

was sacrificed to the prevailing demon. A consequent recovery of strength now fitted the survivors for their dreadful task. They proceeded to the mountain pass, headed by Christie, and killed a traveller, by knocking him on the head with a hammer, and then removed him to the cavern, where his body was treated in the same manner as that of the woman on whom the lot of death had fallen. They repeated this operation whenever their hunger returned; making no selection of their victims, unless when there was a choice between a foot-passenger and a horseman—the latter of whom, always preferred for the sake of his horse, was dragged from his seat with a large iron hook, fixed to the end of a pole—an invention of Christie's, serving afterwards to give him the dreadful name by which he became so well known. That which hunger at first suggested became afterwards a matter of choice, if not of fiendish delight. The silent process of assuaging the pain arising from want subsequently changed into a banquet of cannibals; the song of rivalry was sounded in dithyrambic measure over the dead body of the victim, and the corrybantic dance of the wretches who required to still conscience by noise, or die, was footed to the wild music which, escaping from the cavern, rung among the hills. Such were the obsequies which Scotchmen, resigning the nature of man, amidst unheard-of agonies, celebrated over the corpses of their countrymen.

These things reached the ears of government; and an armed force was despatched to the hills to seize the cannibals. Several of them were caught; but Christie and some others escaped, and were never captured. The bones of their victims were collected, and conveyed to Perth; where, upon being counted, it appeared that they had killed no fewer than thirty travellers. From these transactions sprung that name, *Christiecleek*, which is so familiar to the ears of Scotchmen. "*Christiecleek! Christiecleek!*" became instantly the national nursery bugbear. No child would cry

after the charmed name escaped from the lips of the nurse; and even old people shuddered at the mention of a term which produced ideas so revolting to human nature, and so derogatory of Scottish character.

Now it is said that, some time after the performance of the dreadful tragedy we have narrated, an old man in the town of Dumfries, who had three children by his wife, quarrelled her often for the use of a term intended simply to pacify her children when they cried, but which he declared was too much even for his ears. He was a respectable merchant, had earned a considerable sum of money by his trade, and was reputed a most godly man, attending divine service regularly, and performing all the domestic duties with order and great suavity of manner. His neighbours looked up to him with love and respect, and solicited his counsel in their difficulties. His name—David Maxwell—was applauded in the neighbourhood, and he received great sympathy from all who knew him, in consequence of having, as was reported, lost an only brother among Christiecleek's victims—a fact he had concealed from his wife, till her use of the name compelled him to mention it to her, but which afterwards came to be well known.

The silence of the mother had, however, no effect upon the urchins, who, the more they were requested to cease terrifying each other by their national *terriculamentum*, "Christiecleek," the more terrible it appeared to them, and the more they used it. If they abstained from the use of the word in the presence of their parents, they were the more ready to have recourse to it in the passages of the house, and in the dark rooms, and wherever the dreaded being might be supposed to be. The pastime was general throughout Scotland; and David Maxwell's children only followed an example which has been repeated for five hundred years. "Christiecleek!—Christiecleek!" What Scotchman has not heard the dreaded words? Time rolled on, and

the Misses Maxwell resigned their childish pastime for the duties of women. Their father had become a very old man; and the attentions which their mother could not bestow, were willingly yielded by the young women, who were remarked as being very beautiful, as well as very good. They loved their father dearly, and looked upon their filial duties as willing tributes of affection. After they became intrusted with the secret, they substituted for the cry of their youth, which had given their father so much pain, pity for the brother of the victim of the execrated fiend.

At last David Maxwell came to die; and, as he lay on his bed, surrounded by his wife and daughters, he seemed to be wrestling with some dreadful thought which allowed him no rest, but wrung from him, incessantly, heavy groans and muttered prayers. His wife pressed him to open his heart to her, or, if he was disinclined to repose that confidence in her when dying, which he had awarded to her so liberally during a long union, he should, she recommended, send for Father John of the Monastery of St Agnes, and be shrived. The daughters wept as they heard these melancholy statements, and the old man sympathised in their sorrow, which seemed to give him additional pain. At last he seemed inclined to be communicative, and, after a struggle, said to his wife--

“Wha is to tak care o’ my dochters when I am consigned to that cauld habitation whar a faither’s love and an enemy’s anger are alike unfelt and unknown? My effects will be sufficient for the support o’ my household; but money, without a guardian, is only a temptation to destroyers and deceivers. If I could get this point settled to my satisfaction, I micht die in peace.”

“You never tauld me o’ yer freens, David,” said his wife — “a circumstance that has often grieved me. The hundreds o’ Maxwells in the Stewartry and in Dumfries-shire surely contain among them some relation, however distant; but my

uncle will act as guardian to our dochters, and ye hae tried his honesty."

"Yet I dinna want relations," groaned the dying man. "I hae a *brither*."

"A brither," ejaculated the mother and daughter in astonishment; "was he no killed by the monster, Christiecleek, in the Highland cavern?"

"No," answered David, with great pain."

"Whar lives he, and what's his Christian name?" cried the wife, in amazement.

"Is it his *Christian* name ye ask?" said the old man.

"Surely David," replied the wife—"his surname maun be Maxwell."

"But it is not Maxwell," said he, still groaning.

"Not Maxwell!" said the wife. "What is it then?"

"*Christie*!" ejaculated David, with a groan.

The mention of this name produced a strange effect on the minds of the wife and daughters, who, in the brother, saw (as they thought) at once the hated Christiecleek, and found an explanation of the horror which David Maxwell had uniformly exhibited when the name was mentioned in his presence. They had at last discovered the true solution of what had appeared so wonderful; and, having retired for a few minutes, to allow their excitement to subside, they, by comparing notes, came to the conclusion that their father, having been ashamed of his connection with the unnatural being, had changed his name, and dropped all intercourse with him; but that now, when he was about to die, his feelings had overpowered him, and forced him to make the awful confession he had uttered. Pained and shamed by this newly-discovered connection, they were not regardless of what was due to him whose shame and grief had been even greater than theirs, and, accordingly, resolved to yield all the consolation in their power to the good man who could not help

having a bad brother. On their return to the bedside, they found him in great agony both of mind and body.

“This brither, David,” said the wife, “I fear, is little worthy o’ your friendship, and the change o’ your name is, doubtless, the consequence o’ a virtuous shame o’ the connection. But can it be possible that he is that man o’ the mountain cavern, whose name terrifies the bairns o’ Scotland, and maks even the witches o’ the glens raise their bony hands in wonder and execration? Tell us, David, freely, if this be the burden which presses sae heavily on yer mind. Yer wife and dochters will think nae less o’ you for having been unfortunate; and consolation is never sae usefu as when it is applied to a grief that is nae langer secret. The surgeon’s skill is o’ little avail when the disease is unknown.”

This speech, containing apparently the fatal secret, produced a great effect upon the bedridden patient, who rolled from side to side, and sawed the air with his sinewy hands, like one in a state of madness.

“We were speakin o’ guardians for my dochters,” said he, at last, “and I said I had a brither whase surname is Christie. You promised me consolation. Is this your comfort to a deein man? For twenty years I have hated the mention o’ that dreadful name; and now, when I am on my death-bed, speakin o’curators for my bairns, ye rack my ears by tellin me I am the brither o’ *Christiecleek*! Would Christiecleek be a suitable guardian for my dochters? Speak, Agnes—say if ye think Christiecleek would tak care o’ their bodies and their gowd as weel as he tended the victims o’ the Highland cave?”

The wife saw she had gone too far, and begged his pardon for having made the suggestion.

“Ye will forgive me, David,” said she, “for the remark. I haedune ye great injustice; for how is it possible to conceive that sae guid a man could be sae nearly related to a

monster? But ye hae to explain to me the change o' name. How hae you and your brither different surnames?"

"*Because,*" said the dying man, turning round, and staring with lacklustre eyes broadly in the face of his wife—" *because I am Christiecleek!*"

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